

February 11, 2010

To: Interested Parties
From: Ben Tulchin and Ben Krompak, Tulchin Research
Re: **Survey Finds Californians Strongly Oppose Cuts To First 5 Early Childhood Development Funding**

A recent California statewide survey by Tulchin Research finds that a strong majority of likely California voters supports the state’s “First 5” program promoting early childhood development and are solidly opposed to any proposal to significantly cut this popular program. Furthermore, voters would overwhelmingly prefer lawmakers pursue tax increases on those most able to pay, rather than cutting the education and health care services for young children provided by First 5.

Californians overwhelmingly support First 5. Support for First 5, which was initially passed by voters in 1998 in the form of Proposition 10 and has withstood several challenges including most recently in 2009 in the form of Proposition 1D, is very strong statewide. First 5 is supported by 65% of voters, with 43% *strongly* supporting this voter-backed measure, compared to only 24% who oppose the program and the remaining 11% are unsure.

<u>Attitudes Of California Voters Toward First 5</u>	
<i>“As you may know, California’s First 5 program provides funding to local communities to support California’s youngest children with education and health care. First 5 promotes early childhood development and school readiness by funding infant health care, immunization, early childhood education programs, child nutrition programs, and child abuse prevention. It began in 1998 when voters approved Proposition 10, a statewide ballot measure, and is funded by a 50-cent per pack tax on cigarettes. Based on this, would you say you favor or oppose California’s First 5?”</i>	
	All Voters
<i>Favor</i>	65%
<i>Oppose</i>	24%
<i>Don’t Know</i>	11%

Impressively, support for First 5 extends across the political spectrum. The program is favored by 82% of Democrats, 51% of Republicans, and 54% of Decline-To-State and third party voters. This is one of the few issues we have found in recent years that draws such bipartisan support.

<u>Attitudes Of California Voters Toward First 5</u>			
	Democrats	Republicans	DTS/Other
<i>Favor</i>	82%	51%	54%
<i>Oppose</i>	12%	33%	32%
<i>Don’t Know</i>	5%	16%	14%

Voters reject the proposed cuts to First 5 funding, again. The major cuts to First 5’s funding that have been proposed to this point are opposed by 62% of voters, similar to the large majorities that support First 5. These poll findings are remarkably similar to the margins that opposed Proposition 1D, the ballot measure in 2009 that attempted to raid Prop 10 funds that was put on the ballot by former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and the State Legislature. In that election, two-thirds of voters (66%) said No to Prop 1D and only 34% supported it, similar to the greater than 2-to-1 margin that this poll found with California voters once again rejecting the proposal to raid Prop 10 funds to balance the budget.

Opposition to the proposed cuts extends across party lines, as majorities of Democrats, Republicans, and independents reject them. The cuts are opposed by 69% of Democrats, 52% of Republicans, and 61% of Decline-To-State and third party voters.

<u>Attitudes Toward Cutting First 5 Funding As Part Of The 2011 State Budget</u>				
<i>Do you support or oppose the following proposal as part of this year’s budget: “Cut funding for First 5 early childhood health and education programs by 1 billion dollars and cut half of all future funding, including cuts to infant health care, immunizations, early child education, and child abuse prevention.”</i>				
	All Voters	Democrats	Republicans	Decline-To-State / Other
<i>Support</i>	29%	22%	37%	31%
<i>Oppose</i>	62%	69%	52%	61%
<i>Don’t Know</i>	9%	8%	11%	8%

Rather than cut First 5 health and education services for young children, California voters would much prefer to raise taxes on those who can afford it. Asked whether we should cut First 5 funding for early childhood education and health programs or increase taxes on those who can afford it, such as large corporations, oil companies, tobacco companies, and the wealthy, 65% of voters prefer raising taxes.

<u>Voters Prefer Raising Taxes On Those Who Can Afford It Over Cutting First 5 Funding For Early Childhood Development</u>	
<i>“Please tell me which statement you agree with more.”</i>	
	All Voters
<i>“We should cut California’s First 5 funding for early childhood education and health programs and eliminate the reserve fund to help balance the state budget.”</i>	23%
<i>“Instead of cutting funding for California’s First 5 programs for early childhood health and education services, we should raise taxes on those who can afford it, such as oil companies, tobacco companies, and the wealthy.”</i>	65%
<i>Both</i>	1%
<i>Neither</i>	7%
<i>Don’t Know</i>	4%

In conclusion, this poll clearly shows that California voters overwhelmingly support First 5 and want elected officials to pursue alternatives to cutting funding for early childhood development. Opposition to cutting First 5 remains consistent with past results, such as when voters overwhelmingly rejected Proposition 28 to overturn Prop 10 and Proposition 1D in 2009 in a previous effort to raid First 5 funds. Voters continue to back First 5 and do not want this program cut.

Survey Methodology: From February 8 – February 10, 2011, Tulchin Research conducted a telephone survey in California among 600 likely voters. The margin of error for this survey is +/- 4%.