



For Immediate Release
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Governor, State Legislative Leaders Welcome Afghan Refugees

First 5 California Supports Legislative Action

Sacramento, CA — First 5 California issued a statement today supporting Governor Newsom, Pro Tem Atkins and Speaker Rendon’s proposal to support Afghan refugees resettling in California.

“For more than 20 years, First 5 California has been a champion for children and families,” said First 5 California Executive Director Camille Maben, “We applaud this proposal to extend a comprehensive safety net for Afghan children and their families, our newest community members, and call on all legislators to support the general fund expenditures necessary to make this aid possible.”

Governor Newsom, with support from legislative leadership is requesting “...\$16.7 million in general funds, which will be used to provide cash assistance and other services for newly arriving Afghan refugees to California.” The Governor is also directing a multifaceted approach that will assist these newcomers with multiple state and federal programs that include housing, food assistance, and health care. Additionally, philanthropic support will raise an additional \$20 million from private entities via the California Dignity for Families Fund to complement these state supports.

“As a Vietnamese-American and refugee literally born en route to freedom during the fall of Saigon, I am especially grateful for Governor Newsom, Senate President pro Tempore Toni G. Atkins, and Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon’s leadership in providing critical assistance for our Afghan refugee community,” said Jackie Thu-Huong Wong, First 5 California’s Chief Deputy Director. “California is a beacon of hope for many and welcomes refugees and immigrants. First 5 California is committed to ensuring that all children and families feel safe, supported, and nurtured.”

For more information on the partnership, visit the California Dignity for Families Fund at www.qcir.org/CADignityFund.

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ABOUT FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA:

First 5 California was established in 1998 when voters passed Proposition 10, which taxes tobacco products to fund services for children ages 0 to 5 and their families. First 5 California programs and resources are designed to educate and support teachers, parents, and caregivers in the critical role they play during a child's first five years – to help California kids receive the best possible start in life and thrive. For more information, please visit www.cafc.ca.gov.