



Truth and Justice in Child Support Response to The Final 2021-2022 Budget

Eliminating uncollectable debt, increasing child support passthrough to 100%, and reducing child support interest rates to 0% will ensure that families of color and families with low incomes are receiving the resources that they are entitled to.

Sacramento, Calif. (July 7th, 2021)

We commend the Governor's and Legislature's efforts to improve the child support system. The Truth and Justice in Child Support Coalition is grateful that the Governor and Legislature is working towards removing uncollectible government-owed child support debt for some families, specifically individuals who are veterans, Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI), and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients. Bold policy such as removing uncollectible government-owed debt is one component in ensuring our child support system effectively supports children instead of criminalizing low-income families.

While we celebrate the action to remove uncollectible government-owed child support debt, we hope all families can have their government-owed child support debt removed. With the removal of government-owed debt, we have seen this improve family relationships and increase the likelihood non-custodial parents pay child support. Therefore, we are calling for the reduction of the child support interest rate to 0%, to prevent the continuous extraction of income from low-income families. In order to transform the child support system, we need more bold policies and initiatives that emphasize supporting children rather than penalizing non-custodial parents.

Every year, hundreds of thousands of California children living in poverty do not receive all of the child support payments made by their parents. When a single parent signs up for certain public benefits in California, such as CalWORKs or Medi-Cal, they are required to sign over their rights to their child support payments. In January 2022, California will allow \$100 for one child and \$200 for two or more children to pass through if a non-custodial parent pays child support. This harmful policy strips valuable resources from low-income children, their families and their communities. We know more can be done: 100% of child support payments should go directly to the child. Low-income parents should not be a

source of revenue for our safety net nor should there be a price tag on our safety net for low-income families.

Truth and Justice in Child Support is a growing statewide coalition of 50+ organizations that seek to change state policy on child support pass-through, payments and collections to better support low-income children and their families and reduce child poverty in California. For more information, read our report, The PayBack Problem. Please contact Sevely Sngunon at ssngunon@childrensdefense.org , for additional information.