



Friends Committee on Legislation of California

UPDATE – July 2022

Here in Sacramento, a \$308 billion state budget has been passed by the Legislature and signed by the governor, many of the bills FCLCA is supporting have reached the second house, and the Legislature is in recess until August 1. Thank you so much for your support and activism that have made it possible for FCLCA to continue as a voice of conscience – now for 70 years running!

This is also typically the time we reach out to you and our other supporters to update you on what's happened so far this year, what we expect to see in the future and to ask for your financial support in our mid-year fundraising campaign.

As you may know, FCLCA relies for over 90% of our income from individuals, including monthly sustainers and people who give single gifts during the year.

Many of those donations come at the end of the year, so right we now are asking all our supporters to consider making a mid-year gift to help keep our program strong through summer and early fall - a critical time for our advocacy. Supporters may also want to consider becoming a monthly sustainer or increasing their monthly amount if already signed up.

FCLCA, our lobbying organization, particularly needs support. Contributions – not tax-deductible – can be made online at www.fclca.org. Donations to FCL Education Fund, which are tax-deductible, are always welcome and can also be made at www.fclca.org. Checks of course can be mailed to the FCLCA office at 2030 West El Camino, Suite 210, Sacramento, CA 95833.

The Year so Far

California's 2022-23 State Budget: History was made in the state budget this year, as important investments and policies that FCLCA has worked on in coalition for years were adopted, including:

Historic Medi-Cal expansion – California became the first state in the nation to extend the state version of Medicaid (Medi-Cal) to all those eligible, regardless of

immigration status. The budget also ensured continuous Medi-Cal coverage for children zero -5 to keep them from falling through the cracks during these vulnerable years. Because of your support FCLCA has been able to actively participate for years as a member of the Health Access Coalition, which has worked to expand healthcare access for all Californians.

Historic investments in low-income children and families – You may also recall that FCLCA has actively participated for years in the Campaign to End Child Poverty and the campaign to expand the Earned Income Tax Credit – one of the most powerful anti-poverty tools available – to more low-income people.

FCLCA participated in a number of successful budget asks this year, including

- HOPE Accounts – a new program of trust fund accounts for low-income children who have lost a parent to COVID and for children who have experienced long-term foster care.
- Increased CalWORKs grants to at last bring all children out of deep poverty.
- Expanding the Young Child Tax Credit to families where the adults are fulltime caregivers with no earned income.
- Creating a Foster Youth Tax Credit for young adults who grew up in the foster care system.
- Significant new investments in childcare infrastructure and reimbursement rates, and a continued waiver of fees for low-income families until 2024.

You may be interested in reading the budget analysis by our coalition partner the California Budget and Policy Center and other reactions to the budget posted on our website www.fclca.org.

The Legislature and governor also responded to activist calls for significant investments in climate resilience in the 2022-23 state budget. The Department of Finance reports an expansion of investments by \$39 billion “on top of the historic \$15 billion in the previous state budget, for one-time projects over a five-year period. This includes accelerating the transition to Zero Emission Vehicles, clean energy, climate-friendly transportation projects, drought and wildfire resilience, sea level rise mitigation and nature-based solutions and includes investments targeted to disadvantaged communities.”

Bills Move Forward

Your support has enabled registered lobbyists representing FCLCA to weigh in on dozens of bills and budget items so far this year. And your support empowered grassroots activism, with FCLCA supporters sending almost 1,000 messages to their legislators and the governor so far in 2022.

Here are a few highlights:

Criminal Justice Reform:

FCLCA is co-sponsoring **AB 2167**, by Ash Kalra, along with the National Association of Social Workers and Initiate Justice. The bill declares the Legislature's intent that the disposition of a criminal case use the least restrictive means available and requires judges to consider alternatives to incarceration when sentencing. AB 2167 has passed the Assembly and will be up for a vote on the Senate Floor when the legislature reconvenes in August.

FCLCA continues to advocate for **SB 300**, now before the Assembly Appropriations Committee - it amends California's felony murder, special circumstance law so that the death penalty or life without parole cannot be applied to defendants who did not kill or intend to kill during the commission of a crime.

AB 256 would make the Racial Justice Act of 2020 retroactive, prohibiting the state from seeking or obtaining a conviction or imposing a sentence based on race or ethnicity and will now be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

AB 937 prohibits state and local agencies from assisting, in any manner, the detention, deportation, interrogation, of an individual by immigration enforcement, including ICE transfers – now up for a vote on the Senate Floor.

AB 2632 places restrictions on the use of solitary confinement in detention facilities. Senate Appropriations Committee.

SB 1008 requires state and local correctional facilities to provide free phone calls to improve family contact and promote rehabilitation. Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Gun Violence – Gov. Newsom recently signed gun violence prevention legislation supported by FCLCA. Gun violence has surpassed auto accidents as the leading cause of premature death among children in the U.S. While the U.S. Supreme Court recently invalidated a New York state law that requires licensing for concealed carry permits, California has enacted several reform measures this session. **AB 1621**, by Assembly Members Mike Gipson, Al Muratsuchi and Phil Ting, prohibits the sale, possession and purchase of unserialized components to build untraceable ghost guns, which have become prevalent in the commission of homicides. **AB 2571**, by Rebecca Bauer-Kahan and Mike Gipson, prohibits the marketing of firearms to minors and was signed into law by Gov. Newsom. The governor also signed **AB 1594**, by Phil Ting. This bill creates civil liability for gun manufacturers and would allow survivors of gun violence, local governments and the State Attorney General to pursue legal actions.

Workplace rights - FCLCA continues to strongly advocate for **SB 951**, which would raise the wage replacement rate to 90% of their wages for lower income workers taking paid family leave or leave covered under state disability insurance. This is a critical

workers' rights issue, as many who pay into these programs are unable to use them because the wage replacement level is too low to support a family.

We are supporting **AB 257**, which would help protect the over 700,000 workers in California's fast food industry by creating a state-run council to negotiate wages, hours and working conditions; **AB 2847**, which would create a pilot program of unemployment benefits to cover workers who are currently excluded due to immigration status; **SB 1162** to address discrimination in wages and promote wage transparency to the public and to job applicants; and **AB 1949** to allow employees to take up to 5 days of bereavement leave upon the death of a family member.

In the critical area of environmental legislation, Gov. Newsom has signed a landmark measure to regulate plastic pollution. A compromise was reached on **SB 54**, by Ben Allen, which mandates the plastics industry to meet source reduction and recycling targets. By 2032, all packaging must be recyclable or compostable, and the industry will pay \$5 billion over 10 years to mitigate plastic pollution. As a result of the legislative compromise, a similar ballot initiative that had qualified for the November ballot was withdrawn by the sponsors.

Among other important environmental bills that FCLCA will continue to advocate for with your support are:

SB 222, which requires the State Water Resources Control Board to develop a program to provide rate assistance to low-income residential ratepayers of community water systems and to tribal water systems that opt to participate in the program; **SB 260**, which requires corporations with annual revenues more than \$1 billion to publicly disclose their Greenhouse Gas Emissions footprint; **AB 2146**, which bans neonic pesticides in non-agricultural uses and **AB 2026**, which requires a phased reduction of single-use plastic packaging by online retailers. **AB 1817**, which would phase out the highly toxic chemicals perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in clothes and textiles sold in California, and **AB 2771**, which prohibits the sale in California of beauty and personal care products containing PFAS, both face votes on the Senate Floor.

A bill to require CalPERS and STRS to divest upwards of \$9 billion in holdings in the largest fossil fuel companies is dead. **SB 1173**, by Lena Gonzalez, passed the full Senate, but was refused a hearing in the Public Employees and Retirement Committee by the Chair, Assembly Member Jim Cooper.

Ballot Propositions

It's an election year and seven propositions will be on the ballot on November 8! Your support enables FCLCA board members and volunteers to study, analyze, make recommendations and disseminate information on the ballot propositions that Californians will face this fall. These include several gambling initiatives, and voters will be asked to amend the state constitution to guarantee women's reproductive freedom and whether to retain a law that prohibits the sale of flavored tobacco products.

Thank you again for allowing us to bring FCLCA's voice to California's legislative process. If your circumstances permit, we would very much appreciate your mid-year contribution!

Ways to contribute:

Online at www.fclca.org

Mail: By remittance envelope or your own envelope to FCLCA 2030 W. El Camino Ave., Suite 210, Sacramento, CA 95833

Give monthly:

- You can set it up yourself online at www.fclca.org.
- You can send us your credit card information or contact Dale Richter at dale@fclca.org with the information and we will charge your credit card monthly.
- You can contact Dale to have it deducted directly from your bank account via ACH. Increase a monthly sustainer amount by contacting Dale, dale@fclca.org.