COUNTY OF SISKIYOU

Board of Supervisors

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May 19, 2026

Via Electronic Mail Only

Senator Carolin Menjivar, Chair
Budget Subcommittee #3 on Health and Human Services
1021 O Street, Suite 6630
Sacramento, CA 95814
SBUD.Committee@senate.ca.gov

Assembly Member Dr. Corey A. Jackson, Chair
Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on Human Services
1021 O Street, Suite 6120
Sacramento, CA 95814
budgetsub2@asm.ca.gov

Subject: Siskiyou County Opposition to RN 26 14623

Dear Chair Menjivar and Chair Jackson,

The Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors respectfully opposes the proposed trailer bill language amending Welfare and Institutions Code section 12301.61 related to local In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) collective bargaining. We respectfully request that the proposed language be removed from the budget trailer bill.

At the outset, Siskiyou County wishes to emphasize that it values the important work performed by IHSS providers and remains committed to supporting IHSS consumers and maintaining access to essential in-home care services. The County's concern is not with IHSS providers or the collective bargaining process itself, but with a retroactive impractical effect and punitive funding mechanism that would undermine good-faith negotiations while worsening the fiscal challenges already facing rural counties.

As currently drafted, the proposed trailer bill language creates a new July 1, 2026 trigger for counties that have not reached agreement following fact-finding recommendations issued before June 30, 2026. Under the proposal, affected counties would have 90 days to reach an agreement, after which a withholding of 1991 Realignment funds would occur beginning October 1, 2026 if no agreement is reached.

The proposal is concerning because it changes the legal and fiscal consequences of negotiations that have already occurred under the existing statutory framework. Siskiyou County has participated in bargaining and the statutory fact-finding process in reliance on current law, which expressly limits withholding authority to circumstances where the collective bargaining agreement for IHSS providers in the county has expired. This matter, however, involves initial Memorandum of Understanding negotiations, not negotiations following the expiration of an existing agreement. The proposed language would effectively eliminate that distinction by creating a new withholding trigger tied to pre-June 30, 2026 fact-finding recommendations and the failure to reach agreement within 90 days after July 1, 2026. Applying a new fiscal penalty to proceedings already underway or completed is fundamentally unfair, undermines confidence in the collective bargaining process, and appears to single out the only county not currently subject to the expired-MOU withholding framework.

The proposal would also have serious fiscal consequences for Siskiyou County. The County is currently operating under significant budget constraints and must carefully balance competing obligations for mandated public services with limited local revenue sources. One-time funds were already used to offset the County's FY 2025-26 General Fund deficit, leaving the County with very limited flexibility moving forward. As the County moves through the FY 2026-27 budget process, it is facing a similar deficit as the prior year, with General Fund expenditures continuing to outpace revenues. These financial realities directly affect the County's ability to absorb additional ongoing costs without negatively impacting other critical services.

Importantly, withholding 1991 Realignment funds would not appropriate any new state or federal dollars for IHSS provider compensation. It would instead penalize the County by removing 1991 Realignment funds from existing local obligations, thereby worsening the same fiscal constraints that have affected bargaining. Moreover, detrimental impacts to those programs and services negatively impact the residents who depend upon them every day. In a rural county such as Siskiyou, where revenue options are limited, a Realignment withholding would shift additional financial burdens onto the County's already constrained General Fund and could force reductions in other programs.

Siskiyou County has participated in good-faith negotiations and complied with the statutory collective bargaining and fact-finding process throughout these discussions. The County also notes that the Union elected to bypass mediation and proceed directly to fact-finding. While the County respects that decision, it further demonstrates that the negotiations proceeded under the statutory framework that existed at the time the process began.

Additionally, IHSS fact-finding under state law is not simply a wage-comparison exercise. The statutory process specifically requires consideration of the public interest, the welfare of the public, and the County's financial ability to pay. Siskiyou County's position throughout negotiations has been driven by fiscal capacity and long-term sustainability, not opposition to IHSS providers or the IHSS program itself. Siskiyou County recognizes the difficult wage issues identified in factfinding; however, the State should not address those issues by imposing a retroactive Realignment penalty that removes funding from other mandated local services. The proposed trailer bill language would effectively override those required considerations by threatening a Realignment withholding if the County does not reach agreement within the newly created 90-day timeline. Rather than solving the underlying financial challenge, the proposal would worsen it by removing funding from the same local revenue streams used to support mandated county services.

Furthermore, this policy change should not be adopted through expedited trailer bill language without a full stakeholder process involving affected entities, public authorities, providers, and consumer representatives.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the Legislature and Administration remove the proposed trailer bill language amending Welfare and Institutions Code section 12301.61. If the Legislature and Administration do not remove the proposed trailer bill language, then in the alternative, we request amendments clarifying that any withholding provision applies only prospectively, only to proceedings initiated after enactment, only where there is an expired collective bargaining agreement or MOU, and only after meaningful consultation with affected counties.

Thank you for your consideration of Siskiyou County's concerns and for your continued support of rural counties and the essential services they provide.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

Ray A. Haupt

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Ray A. Haupt
Chair, Board of Supervisors

CC: Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange
Assemblymember Heather Hadwick
Senator Megan Dahle
Rural County Representatives of California