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GOVERNOR ANNOUNCES 2010-2011 CALIFORNIA BUDGET PROPOSAL, INCLUDES ELIMINATION OF VITAL SAFETY-NET PROGRAMS

Sacramento, CA—Today Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger announced his 2010-2011 California budget proposal. With a state budget deficit of nearly \$20 billion, Governor Schwarzenegger proposed a plan that would cut more than \$2.9 billion from Health and Human Services (HHS) programs including the elimination of In-Home Supportive Services, Healthy Families, and CalWORKS.

While the final budget will require approval from the State Legislature, it is clear that the Governor's proposed budget cuts will severely affect low-income Southeast Asian American families. With 29.3% of Cambodian, 37.6% of Hmong, 19.1% of Laotian and 16% of Vietnamese American living in poverty¹ compared to the national average of 12.4%, funding cuts to HHS programs like Medi-Cal and Cal WORKS can create dire circumstances in the lives of low-income families, especially during times of economic crisis. In particular, the Governor's proposal will disproportionately impact children and elders in the Southeast Asian American community. As a result of last year's budget cuts, 585,000 children², including many Southeast Asian American children, were disenrolled from Healthy Families and no longer have access to health care. This same program, along with the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI) and Adult Day Health Care benefits, are targeted for elimination in the Governor's proposal. Additionally, the Governor's plan eliminates access to state programs and services for legal immigrants who have been in the United States for less than five years.

Doua Thor, SEARAC's Executive Director states, "California needs to be a leader in showing the country that even in economic crisis, the basic needs of individuals—elders, children and families—cannot be compromised. Budget cuts to programs and services serving communities in need create a long lasting and drastic ripple effect that will further devastate our communities and the economy."

SEARAC will continue to follow the California budget and work with state legislators and community members to preserve Health and Human Services programs and seek solutions that will limit the adverse impacts on low income and vulnerable communities.

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¹ 2000 US Census

² http://www.100percentcampaign.org/fs/global:file/article/x2lje42tue848i_files/file/id/y5q1zzawaclqxr?_c=y6ekziuqm1tp6v