

Example: Letter to Legislature
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Senator Caroline Menjivar
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #3
6150 Van Nuys Blvd., Suite 400
Van Nuys, CA 91401

Assemblymember Dr. Corey Jackson
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #1
1021 O Street
Sacramento, CA 94249

February 19, 2026

Re: ***Preserve SDP Implementation Funds for Access & Equity***

Dear Senator Menjivar and Assemblymember Jackson,

On behalf of the North Los Angeles County Regional Center's (NLACRC) Self-Determination Local Advisory Committee (SDLAC), we respectfully urge you to protect the Self-Determination Program (SDP) Implementation Funds.

The NLACRC's SDLAC is a volunteer committee currently comprised of 10 members. They are SDP participants, family members, a Family Focus Resource Center representative, an Office of Client Rights Advocacy representative, and a community partner. Our role is established in statute to provide oversight of the SDP, review the development and ongoing progress of the SDP, ensure the advancement of the five principles of the SDP, and make ongoing recommendations for improvements to the regional center and the department. We bring the lived experience of participants directly into program planning to ensure SDP works for everyone.

Welfare and Institutions Code section 4685.8(f) sets aside Implementation Funds to help participants successfully use SDP and exercise real choice and control. DDS guidance requires regional centers to work with Local Volunteer Advisory Committees (LVAC) to identify local needs and direct these funds where they are most needed. The current trailer bill proposed changes removes the language supporting this.

Statewide reviews, including the Little Hoover Commission and the Master Plan on Developmental Services, have found that SDP has high administrative barriers—especially for communities that already face inequities. Implementation Funds are the only resources specifically designed to remove these barriers and are the only SDP funds guided directly by participants and families at the local level.

At NLACRC, these funds have successfully supported participant coaching, independent facilitator training and mentoring programs, outreach and resource fairs, a very successful support group, accessible training materials, and data analysis to identify gaps. The funds were also used to conduct trainings for NLACRC staff, SDP participants, family members, and community partners. We have been the state model for how to expend the implementation funds here at NLACRC.

Most importantly, they advance equity by helping underserved communities access SDP, reducing disparities in participation, and supporting participants to develop workable spending plans.

Redirecting these funds would undermine the SDP, weaken local oversight, and disproportionately harm communities that already face the greatest challenges accessing services. It would also conflict with legislative intent and the statutory role of LVACs.

We respectfully urge the Legislature to reject any reallocation of SDP Implementation Funds and ensure they remain available for their intended purpose: expanding access, promoting equity, and reducing disparities across California.

Respectfully,

North Los Angeles County Regional Center
Self-Determination Local Advisory Committee

CC:

Director Pete Cervinka, Department of Developmental Services
Secretary Kim Johnson, California Health and Human Services Agency
Chris Odneal, Department of Finance
Elizabeth Schmitt, Senate Budget Committee Staff
Mareva Brown, Office of President pro tempore
Nicole Vazquez, Assembly Budget Committee Staff
Kelsy Castillo, Office of Assembly Speaker