



Our mission is to empower and promote the well-being of families, child care providers, and the greater community through financial and support services.

May 13, 2026

San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 310
San Diego, CA 92101

Meeting Date: May 19, 2026
Agenda Item No. 26
Distribution Date: May 15, 2026
Batch No. 01

RE: Supporting San Diego Children and Families Through Bridge Funding for Healthy Development Services (Agenda Item 26)

Dear San Diego County Board of Supervisors,

My name is Rick Richardson, and I serve as the President and CEO of CDA, as well as Vice-Chair of the San Diego County First 5 Commission. I am submitting this comment for **Agenda Item 26 in strong support of the proposed bridge funding for Healthy Development Services (HDS)**, a lifeline for thousands of young children and families across our County.

HDS provides essential developmental screenings, speech and behavioral therapies, and parent education for families with children from birth to five years old. As a Commissioner for First 5 San Diego, I've seen firsthand the transformative impact these services have, not only on individual children, but on entire families and communities. Without this bridge funding, First 5's HDS programs would be reduced by approximately 38% and nearly 3,350 children and families would lose access to critical services in the coming year, many of whom have no other options for care. This would be a catastrophe for those families!

As the President and CEO of CDA, having supported vulnerable children for over 50 years, we know investing in healthy development during the early years is both the right thing to do and one of the smartest public investments we can make. Early support serves as an upstream strategy that helps prevent more costly interventions for the county later on.

During the transition to the new Integrated Prevention and Early Intervention Services model, this bridge funding will support continuity in services for our little ones who are most vulnerable. Without this support, children will miss critical developmental windows when interventions are most effective and least costly.

I urge the Board to approve this critical bridge funding and continue San Diego's leadership in supporting young children and families.

Thank you for your leadership and continued commitment to the wellbeing of our county.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Rick Richardson, written in a cursive style.

Rick Richardson
President and CEO
CDA