



CALIFORNIA BUDGET PROJECT

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How the Other Half Fared: The Impact of the Great Recession and the Budget Crisis on California's Women and Their Families

New Briefs Show Women Have Been Hard Hit by the Economy and Budget Cuts

SACRAMENTO – Three new policy briefs released today by the California Budget Project, a nonpartisan public policy research group, show that women have been significantly impacted by the recession and disproportionately affected by recent and proposed budget cuts.

The briefs are available at www.cbp.org and were supported by a grant from the Women's Foundation of California.

How the Other Half Fared: The Impact of the Great Recession on Women finds that women became increasingly vulnerable to job loss as the recession wore on. California's single mothers were hit particularly hard. Many women lost access to health coverage as a result of their own or their spouse's job loss, and married women increasingly became the sole breadwinners for their families.

At the same time, two other briefs, *The Governor's Proposed Cuts to Key Safety-Net Programs Would Disproportionately Affect Low-Income Women and Their Families* and *The Governor's Proposed Cuts to Medi-Cal Would Significantly Affect California's Low-Income Women and Their Families*, show that women are disproportionately affected by recent and proposed budget cuts. Women make up more than three out of five adults enrolled in the major safety-net programs - the CalWORKs Program, the Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) Program, and the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program - programs that help low-income women support their families, find jobs, and help those who are elderly or have disabilities remain safely in their homes.

"Women in California are experiencing a one-two punch," said Jean Ross, executive director of the California Budget Project. "Many have lost their jobs due to the recent downturn, and they're facing a safety net that has been greatly weakened by budget cuts. Policymakers should work to ensure that the budget choices they make reflect the economic realities of women and families in California."

The analyses are designed to put a human face on the upcoming budget debate, according to Judy Patrick, president and CEO of the Women's Foundation of California. On Friday, the Governor will release the May Revision to his 2010-11 Proposed Budget, an updated budget proposal based on the latest revenue estimates and policy proposals.

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"We wanted to have the hard number data that makes crystal clear the impact of the budget cuts on low-income women and their families," said Patrick. "It's unacceptable for low-income women and their families to bear more than their fair share of the burden for balancing California's budget. Our goal is to make sure that the problems faced, and the solutions created, by women living in poverty and their families are at the center of budget and policy debates."

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At 11:00 a.m. today, there will be a call for the media only on the briefs' findings. The call-in number is (800) 290-9461 and the password is women. RSVP at lgardiner@cbp.org or (916) 444-0500.

The California Budget Project (CBP) engages in independent fiscal and policy analysis and public education with the goal of improving public policies affecting the economic and social well-being of low- and middle-income Californians. Support for the CBP comes from foundation grants, publications, and individual contributions. Please visit the CBP's website at www.cbp.org.