



For Immediate Release
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With Many Struggling, Report Shows Need To Support the Public Structures That Help Californians Make Ends Meet

California Families Need at Least \$54,039 To Pay Bills

SACRAMENTO -- A report released today by the California Budget Project, a nonpartisan public policy research group, examines what it costs to support a family with two children or to live as a single adult in California, allowing only for the basics: rent, child care, utilities, health coverage, food, transportation, and other modest expenses.

Making Ends Meet: How Much Does It Cost To Raise a Family in California? finds that a two-parent family with one working parent needs to earn at least \$54,039, a much higher income than what's provided by the minimum wage or the median wage -- the middle point at which half the workers earn less, and half earn more -- assuming full-time, year-round work.

"Our report strives to paint an accurate picture of what it costs for working families to pay the bills. We found that making ends meet remains out of reach for millions of Californians," said Jean Ross, executive director of the CBP. "As state policymakers craft a spending plan this summer, it's important that they support the public systems and structures that working families rely on, such as state-supported child care."

Ross added, "At the federal level, policymakers could significantly help working families by extending portions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that have successfully put needed dollars into the pocketbooks of families and local communities."

The report includes county-by-county estimates of expenses, which vary based on regional costs of living. The CBP found that in order to pay basic bills in California:

- A family with two working parents needs an annual income of \$75,500, equivalent to both parents working full-time for an hourly wage of \$18.15;
- A two-parent family with one working parent needs an annual income of \$54,039, equivalent to an hourly wage of \$25.98;
- A single-parent family needs an annual income of \$64,239, equivalent to an hourly rate of \$30.88;
- A single adult needs an annual income of \$30,445, equivalent to an hourly wage of \$14.64.

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A copy of the report is available at www.cbp.org.

The CBP will hold a call for the media only at 11:00 a.m. today, Thursday, June 24. The call-in number is (800) 290-9461 and the password is CBP. To reserve a spot, contact Lisa Gardiner at lgardiner@cbp.org or (916) 444-0500.

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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.