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Contact: Bill Madison
(916) 263-1093

**Statement from David Kears, Vice Chair,
First 5 California State Commission**

David Kears Statement for Delivery at Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's Signing of California Legislative Bill AB 1422 to Restore Funding to the Healthy Families Program

I would like to thank my fellow commissioners, Executive Director Kris Perry and the First 5 California staff for stepping forward with other like-minded partners to ensure the Healthy Family Program's survival in the coming year.

First 5 California has a long legacy of supporting health coverage for children up to age 5 in California. Most recently, on August 13, our commission voted to contribute up to \$81.4 million to the Healthy Families Program to cover health care costs for our state's youngest children through June 2010. This fix will allow more than 200,000 children up to age 5 to receive low-cost health care coverage at a time when families need it most.

Today, AB 1422 is signed into law with a spirit of shared responsibility, propelling forward our shared mission to improve access to affordable children's health care.