

Policy 101



MARCH 16, 2011



California Family
Resource Association

Strong Families. Strong Communities.

Objectives



- **Define: What is Public Policy?**
- **Why is policy important to your organization?**
- **How can you get involved in public policy?**
- **Legislative and Budget basics**

Public Policy



What is “policy” ?

- Agreement /abide by
 - Rule
- Examples from your last trip to the mall

Public Policy



- **Public = Everyone**
- **Policy = Rules / laws**
- **Public Policy is made by**
 - **Government**
 - **People**

How well do you know your elected officials?



“Public” Policy



- Simple/common
- Breathing
- You participate every day
- Active/passive
- Policy – within the last 2 hours
- How?
 - Drive to work
 - Drink water

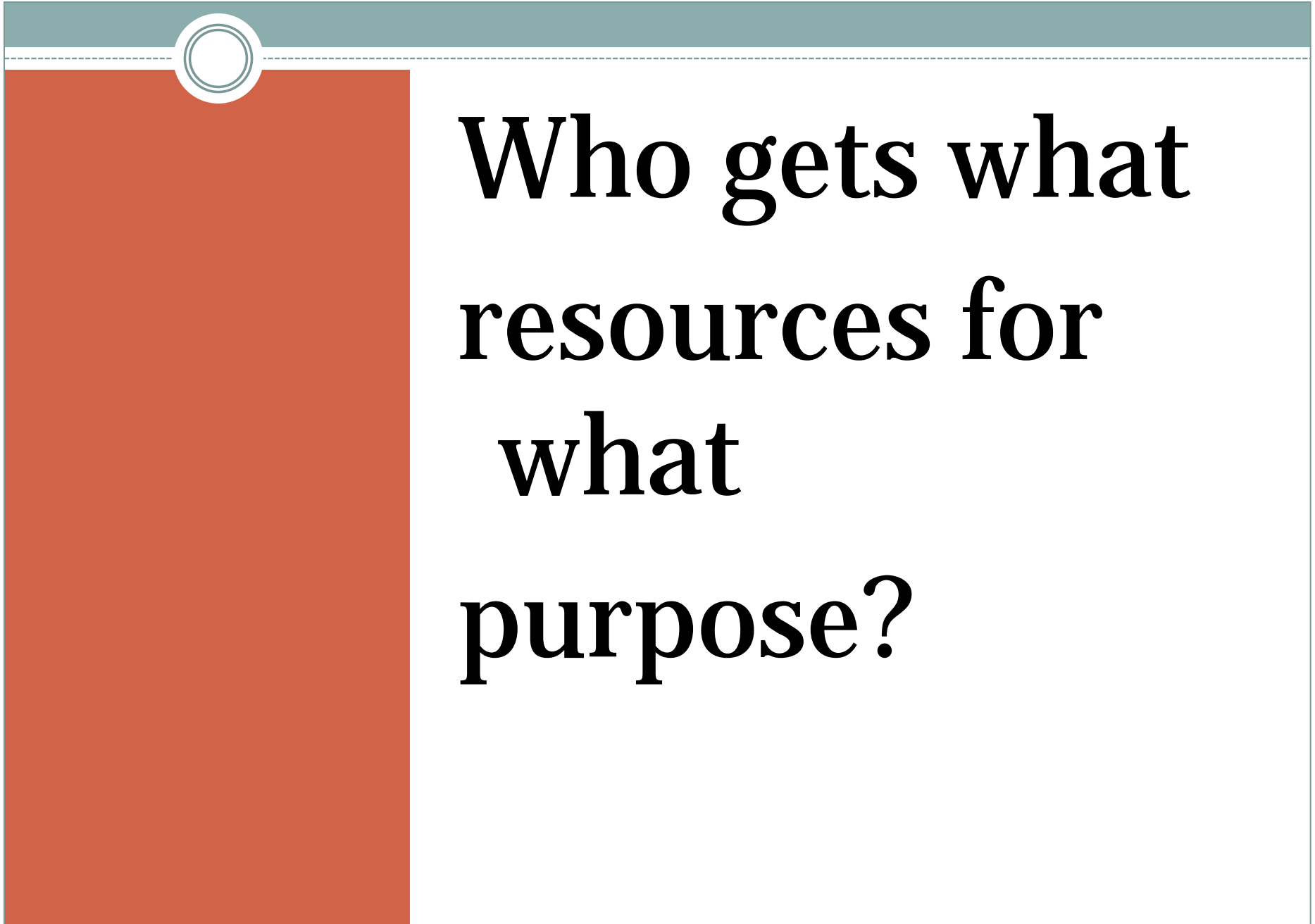
What public policies have you encountered today?



Categories of Pubic Policy



- Education
- Transportation
- Human/Social Services
 - Employment
 - Public Safety
- Many others.....



**Who gets what
resources for
what
purpose?**

Public Policy Interests of Your Organization



- **Programs**
- **Outcomes**
- **Mission**
- **Population**

Why Should Your Organization Care About Public Policy?



Policy = Re\$ource\$

Re\$ource\$ = sustainability

Sustainability = strong families

How Do Policymakers Decide What Policies They Take Up?



- Healthy Start (Wilson)
- CWS/Reform (Davis)
- Mental Health (Hayashi)
- You can impact policy – story – experience – data.
What would you like to change?



THE STATE LEGISLATURE

California's Legislature



Senate

- 40 Members
- Led by Senate President pro Temporal, President pro Tem Darrell Steinberg (D – Sacramento)

Assembly

- 80 Members
- Led by Speaker of The Assembly, Speaker John A. Perez (D – Los Angeles)

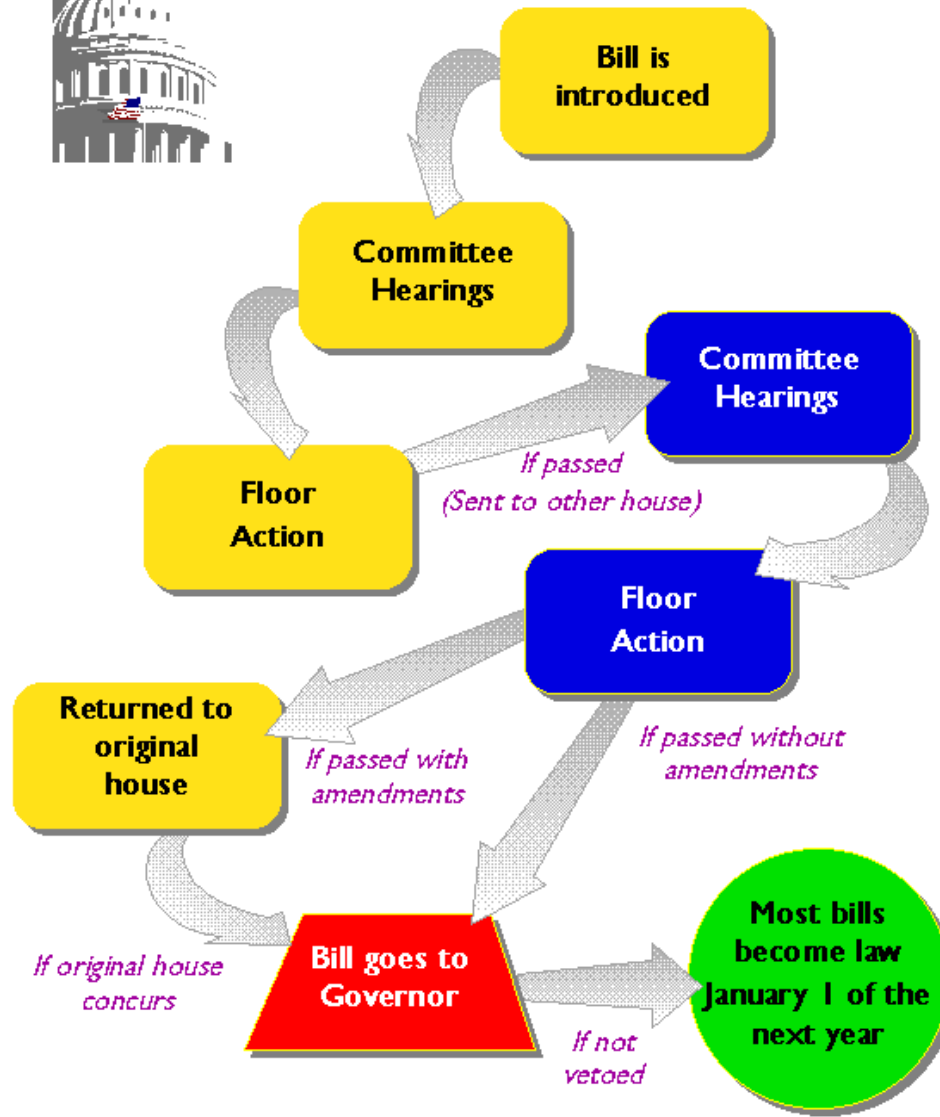
Key Legislative Staff



- District Staff
- Chief of Staff
- Issue based staff/consultants
- Learn more about your Legislator and their priorities on the website. You may find them at www.leginfo.ca.gov
 - Example: “Long active in community affairs, Senator Correa’s passions include providing healthcare for children and mental healthcare services for our communities, as well as ensuring the affordability of higher education for all Californians.”



How a Bill Becomes a Law





THE STATE BUDGET

What's In It?



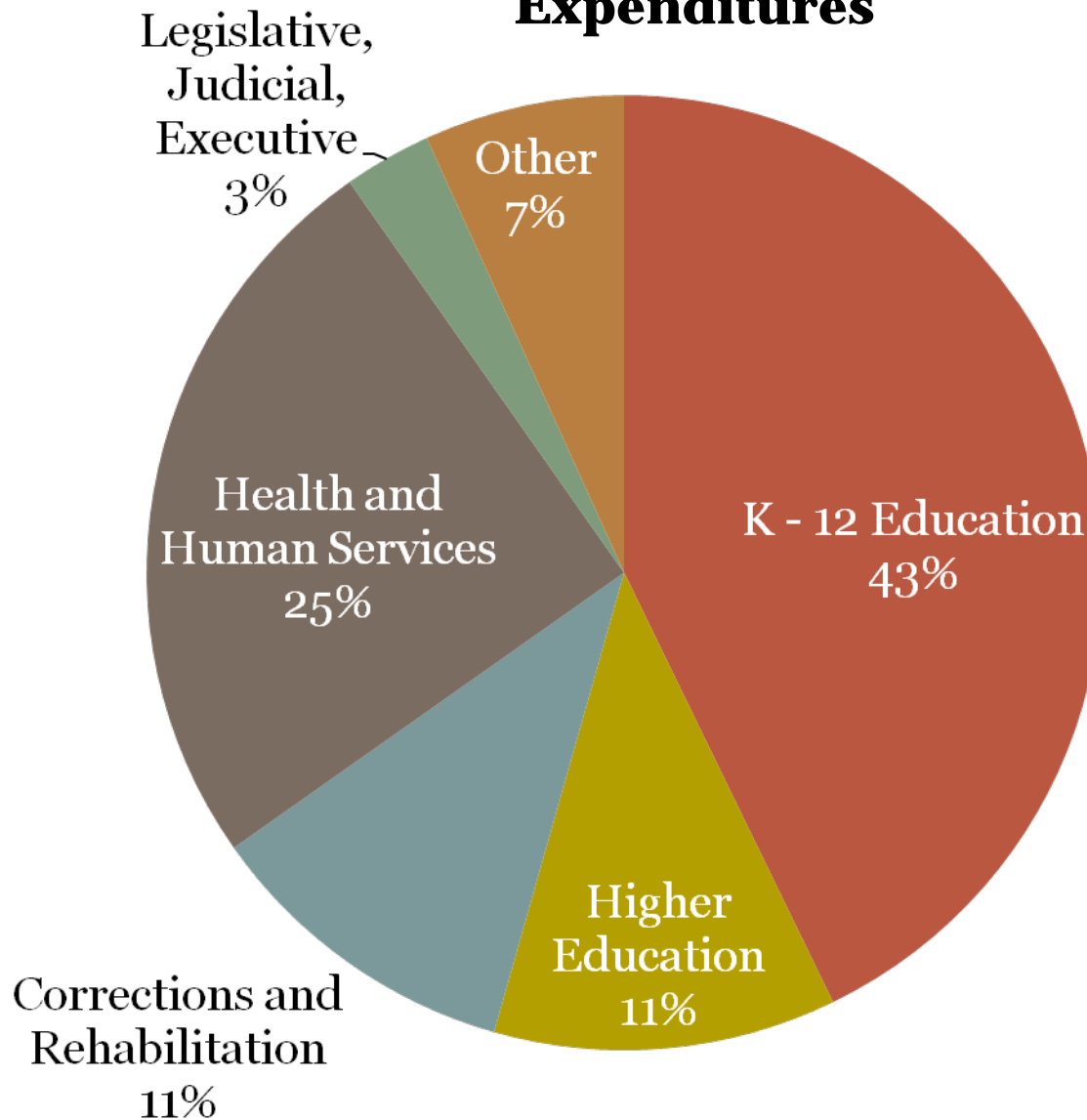
Revenue

- Personal Income Tax
- Sales Tax
- Corporation Taxes
- Tobacco Taxes
- Insurance Tax
- Estate Tax
- Liquor Tax

Expenditure

- K-12 Education
- Health and Human Services
- Courts
- Higher Education
- Business, Transportation and Housing
- Youth and Adult Correctional Agencies
- State and Consumer Services
- Environmental Protection

2011-12 General Fund Expenditures



Health and Human Services



- **Examples of HHS Budget Items**
 - CalWorks
 - Child Care
 - Child Welfare Services
 - Foster Care Services
 - In Home Supportive Services
 - HIV/AIDS Programs

Who Does What When (In a Normal Year)



- Governor releases his/her budget proposal on or by January 10th
- Non-partisan Analyses by Legislative Analysts Office
- Budget Committee Process
- Governor submits a May Revise
- Conference Committee hashes out differences between Senate and Assembly versions of the budget

Who Does What When (In a Normal Year) - Cont.



- Floor Discussion and Vote by June 15
- If there is not agreement, the “Big 5” (Governor, Speaker of Assembly, Speaker pro Tempore, and Minority Leaders of both houses) meets to compromise and get the 2/3 vote required
- Final Budget Package with 2/3 vote goes to Governor
 - The Governor may reduce or eliminate any appropriation through the line-item veto
 - ✦ Legislature can override a veto with 2/3 vote

What Happened This Year?



- **Governor Brown's proposal includes a request for voters to extend current tax rates (a temporary increase) for 5 years.**
 - Request for inclusion on June Ballot
 - Governor set March 10th as a deadline to pass budget
 - Initiative language then needs to go to Secretary of State in time for printing of all election materials

What Can YOU Do?



- The best time for public input is while subcommittee's are meeting, between March and May.
- To influence the budget, it is important to contact:
 - 1) Your State Senator and Assembly Member
 - 2) Members of the budget committee and appropriate subcommittees (Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Health and Human Services and Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee on Health, Human Services, Public Safety and General Government)
 - 3) The Governor

What Can YOU Do?



- Call district or capitol offices, write a letter, schedule a meeting, or send email!
- Site Visits!
- Find Your Legislator:
<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/yourleg.html>

Final Words of Wisdom



**“YOU KNOW HOW IT IS AT THE
CAPITOL....WIN A FEW, LOSE A
FEW. WHAT YOU CANT AFFORD IS
TO MISS THE GAME.**

**“IF YOU’RE NOT AT THE TABLE,
YOU’RE ON THE TABLE”**

QUESTIONS?





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