

SYSTEMS OPTIMIZATION & SUSTAINABILITY (SOS) COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

Date: August 20, 2025, Time: 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Commission Members: Érik Fernández y García (Chair), LaWanda Wesley,

Advisory Committee Member(s): Carolyn Curtis, Heidi Keiser Alternates: Kairis Chiaji,

Darsey Varnedoe

Staff: Julie Gallelo, Erin Maurie, Maria Hammil

This is an In-Person Meeting for Committee Members

Location: First 5 Sacramento, 2750 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 330 Sacramento, CA 95833.

Community/Public May Join by Zoom: <a href="https://saccounty-nttp

net.zoomgov.com/j/1604906603?pwd=xpoZgo4GF5DYXQuN4HvY6q5q68vYge.1

Meeting ID: 160 490 6603 Passcode: 655996 Phone: 669-254-5252

- 1. Call to Order/Roll Call
 - Open Commissioner Seat
- 2. Public Comment on Off-Agenda Items
- 3. Approve Draft Action Summary for June 18, 2025
- 4. Change October 15th meeting date: Either October 8th or 22nd
- 5. Policy and Advocacy Activities
- 6. Equity In Action Committee Update
- 7. Parent Partnership Initiative
- 8. First 5 CA and Association Update
- 9. Committee Member Comments
- Future Agenda Items
- 11. Adjourn

If there is a need for an accommodation pursuant to Americans with Disabilities Act(ADA), medical reasons or for other needs, please contact First 5 staff at First5sac@saccounty.gov and CA Relay Services 711 (for the hearing impaired).



SYSTEMS OPTIMIZATION & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

DRAFT ACTION SUMMARY

June 18, 2025 – 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Members: LaWanda Wesley (Chair), Érik Fernández y García

Advisory Committee Member(s): Carolyn Curtis, Heidi Keiser Alternates: Kairis Chaiji,

Darsey Varnedoe

Staff: Julie Gallelo, Erin Maurie, Maria Hammill

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:24 a.m. A quorum was established. Present: LaWanda Wesley, Érik Fernández y García and Heidi Keiser. Carolyn Curtis, Kairis Chaiji and Darsey Varnedoe attended via zoom and were unable to vote. First 5 Staff: Lindsay Dunkel and Linda Fong Somera.

2. Public Comment on Off-Agenda Items

None.

3. Approve Draft Action Summaries for April 16, 2025

Moved by Érik Fernández y García and seconded by Heidi Keiser.

4. Policy and Advocacy Activities

The policy and advocacy update included a discussion on the Governor's May Revise and the looming federal cuts. LaWanda provided an update on the pros and cons of the Revise for childcare and providers. Heidi gave a debrief on the childcare summit and Julie shared the funding recommendations for the Sacramento Children's Fund (Measure L, the city's cannabis tax).

5. Equity In Action Committee Update

Lindsay Dunckel, Early Care and REDI Manager, gave an update on the Equity in Action (EiA) Committee. We received 61 applicants and after the screening process we invited 18 members to join the EiA Committee. The 3-hour kick off meeting is scheduled for Saturday June 28th at the Roberston Community Center. This first meeting will be a general overview of the committee's tasks and a bonding opportunity towards creating an open and cohesive group.



6. Review 2024 Strategic Plan Systems Improvements

Julie Gallelo provided an update on the 2024 Strategic Plan specifically the systems improvement outcome and goals investment of 1.4 million dollars. The three outcomes are 1. Leveraging dollars, integrated and coordinated services and advocacy and systems change work.

Linda Fong-Somera, Health Manager, provided an update on the health systems improvement efforts. This year we have been focused on learning about the CalAIM initiative and building relationships with our four local health plans. Much of the systems work related to health is still developing and evolving over time, with more to come in years 2 and 3 as we figure out next steps with partners.

7. Committee Member Comments

No comments.

8. Upcoming Events/Future Agenda Items

No comments.

9. Next Meeting

August 20, 2025 and Commissioner Érik Fernández y García will be the chair. Meetings are held in person at the F5 Sac office.

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Erin Maurie, Communications and Policy Director First 5 Sacramento Commission

First 5 Sacramento Systems Optimization and Sustainability (SOS) Committee Agenda Item Cover Sheet

Agenda Item – Update on Policy and Advocacy Activities

Staff Overview

Federal Digest

Attached is the First 5 Association's latest digest from their partners at Raben. In addition to some hard news on federal policies to address homelessness, there were some positive developments around funding for Head Start, schools, and birthright citizenship decisions. And the Senate Appropriations Committee's FY 2026 appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education holds steady and increases existing investments as follows:

- \$8.8 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (\$85 million increase)
- \$12.4 billion for Head Start (\$85 million increase)
- \$315 million for Preschool Development Grants (level funding).

Federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA)

The First 5 Association is signing on to a group letter on behalf of First 5s to comment on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recent guidance around PRWORA that redefines what a "federal public benefit" is. The effect of the new interpretation is to exclude undocumented children and other classes of immigrant children of families with temporary status in the U.S. from receiving an array of services and programs, including Head Start and Early Start programs. This significant policy change will undoubtedly have a chilling and direct effect on immigrant parents enrolling their children.

Additional Information/ Next Steps

None.

Staff Recommendation

Review and comment.

Federal Digest

Biweekly Federal Policy Newsletter Prepared by Raben for Tipping Point Community Grantees

August 6, 2025

Contents

General ... p. 2

Early Childhood ... p. 3

Education ... p. 4

Employment ... p. 5

Housing ... p. 6

Immigration ... p. 8

Legend

Alert: Developments are likely to have a significant impact, and that require action.

Monitor: Developments that have the potential to lead to significant impacts, so keep an eye on them. FYI: Non-urgent updates for situational awareness.

Events

What State Workforce Advocates Need to Know About Reconciliation

Thursday, August 7, 11:30 a.m. PT. National Skills Coalition will host a webinar for the workforce field with guest experts from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the US Climate Alliance to unpack the implications of the federal Budget Reconciliation Act for state advocates and local workforce practitioners. Register here.

Workshop: How to Submit Comments on the HHS Public Benefits Notice

Thursday, August 7, 12-1 p.m. PT. Join Start Early, the Center for Law and Social Policy, National Women's Law Center, First Focus on Children, and National Head Start Association for a hands-on workshop to learn how to submit a public comment in response to the latest notice from HHS on the interpretation of "Federal Public Benefit." Register here.

How to Keep Charitable Nonprofits and Houses of Worship Protected from Partisan Politics

Tuesday, August 26, 12:00 p.m. PT. The National Council of Nonprofits is hosting a webinar on efforts to undermine federal protections for charitable nonprofits, including houses of worship, against partisan politics and the dark money that fuels it. Speakers will discuss why it is critical for charitable nonprofits to remain nonpartisan and how to take action. Register here.

General



Administration Agrees to a Brief Pause of the New Immigration Status Verification Requirement for Federal Program

The administration has agreed to a brief delay, until at least September 3, 2025, in the enforcement of a new immigration status verification policy for numerous federal programs, including Head Start, Career and Technical Education (CTE), adult education, the Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) grant program, Reentry Employment Opportunities, YouthBuild, Emergency Food Assistance, and much more. The pause is part of a court-approved agreement between the administration and the 20 states, including California, that filed a lawsuit. As part of the agreement, states that sued cannot be held liable for extending services to ineligible immigrants before September 3. The pause is especially welcome in the education sector, as the agreement means programs will not be retroactively penalized for enrolling all students regardless of their immigration status.

The administration's new policy is based on its reinterpretation of what counts as a federal public benefit under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, as reported in the previous <u>Federal Digest</u>, and states are continuing to seek an injunction against the entire policy as litigation and advocacy against the policy continues. More from <u>K12 Dive</u>, and <u>California's Attorney General</u>.

- → The Protecting Immigrant Families coalition is welcoming national, state, and local organizations to <u>sign on to a group letter</u> urging HHS to suspend implementation of its new guidance. The deadline is **August 12**. A list of the programs impacted by HHS's guidance is <u>here</u>.
- → For those who have more to say about how HHS' new guidance would impact your organization, your clients, and immigrants in general, consider submitting a public comment. The National Women's Law Center released a comprehensive advocacy toolkit that includes a template for submitting comments on HHS's notice, While focused on Head Start, these resources can be adapted to address the HHS programs of concern to your organization.
- → Comments are **due August 13.** Consider joining the public comment workshop (in the events section above).

Monitor

Senate Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill Rejects Deep Cuts

The Senate Appropriations Committee has advanced its Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 funding bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education by a bipartisan vote of 26-3. The Committee rejected the White House's proposed deep cuts to numerous federal programs and instead proposed modest funding increases to some, as detailed in the Early Childhood, Education, and Employment sections of this newsletter further below.

This bill will likely be the high-water mark for funding health, education, and labor programs, as the House is expected to produce a partisan bill in the fall with lower funding levels. Further, the White House is likely to demand deep cuts and is expected to pursue additional rescissions of domestic funding for FY 2025, undermining the prospects for bipartisan trust and cooperation. Appropriations bills are subject to filibusters in the Senate and therefore require bipartisan cooperation in that chamber. More from the Senate Appropriations Committee's press release, accompanying report, and Bloomberg Government.

Early Childhood



Key Senate Panel Approves Early Childhood Funding Levels for FY 2026

The Senate Appropriations Committee's FY 2026 <u>appropriations bill</u> for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education includes:

- \$8.8 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (\$85 million increase)
- \$12.4 billion for Head Start (\$85 million increase)
- \$315 million for Preschool Development Grants (level funding).

FYI

Withholding Head Start Funds Violated the Law, Watchdog Finds

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that the Trump administration violated federal law by withholding approximately \$825 million in Head Start funding for low-income children between January 20 and April 15. The GAO concluded that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) broke the Impoundment Control Act by not spending funds approved by Congress. The report also noted that HHS and other administration officials failed to cooperate with the investigation. More from *K-12 Dive*.



Senate Committee Approves Nominee to Lead the Administration of Children and Families

On July 31, the Senate Finance Committee advanced the nomination of Alex Adams to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Family Support at the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Read a bio for Mr. Adams, prepared by the Raben team.

Education



Fiscal Year 2026 Education Funding

The Senate Appropriations Committee's bill to fund the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education rejects the administration's proposed cuts to education programs, consolidation of K–12 grants, and efforts to dismantle the Education Department. Instead, the bill maintains funding for the Department of Education, provides small increases for Title I and IDEA, requires the Department of Education to make formula grants available to states and districts on time and maintain the staff necessary to ensure it carries out its statutory responsibilities, and includes new guardrails to prohibit the administration from moving Title I and IDEA programs to other federal agencies. More from <u>K-12 Dive.</u>



Administration to Release Frozen FY 2025 Education Funds

On July 1, the Trump administration withheld \$6.8 billion in Congressional-approved education funding from states, claiming it was examining the funding for compliance with the administration's executive orders and priorities. It released \$1.3 billion for afterschool programs in mid-July. After a sustained outcry from Members of Congress in both parties and education stakeholders, as well as a lawsuit by 24 states, the Department of Education announced that the administration had completed its review of the education programs and will release the remaining funds to states. More from the <u>Associated Press</u>.



Education Department Encourages States to Seek Exemptions from Federal Requirements

The U.S. Department of Education is encouraging states to seek waivers from certain provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). In its <u>Dear Colleague letter</u>, the Department stated that it would welcome waiver requests pertaining to state assessments, school support and improvement activities, and funding flexibility. States must provide the

public with a reasonable opportunity to comment or provide input on any waiver requests they submit and respond to the public comments in their submission to ED. Congress last reauthorized ESEA, currently known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), in 2015. More from *K-12 Dive*.



Artificial Intelligence in Education

On April 23, 2025, President Trump signed an executive order that would establish the Presidential AI Challenge to foster interest and expertise in artificial intelligence (AI) technology for students. The White House officially <u>launched</u> the challenge for students, educators, and school communities to "solve real-world problems in their communities using AI-powered solutions." More from AI GOV.

Employment



Key Senate Panel Boosts Funding for Workforce Development, Rejects President's Proposed Labor Department Cuts

The Senate Appropriations Committee's bill to fund the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education for FY 2026 increases funding for the U.S. Labor Department, pushing back against President Trump's proposed budget cuts. The bill would allocate \$13.7 billion to the department, nearly 3 percent more than the 2025 enacted level, and preserves funding for job training and enforcement programs the president had sought to eliminate, including Job Corps and the office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs.

The bill increases funding for the Employment and Training Administration's job training and employment services by \$78.5 million and maintains flat funding for enforcement agencies such as the Wage and Hour Division, OHSA, and the Employee Benefits Security Administration. Appropriations Committee Chair Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) emphasized the bill's bipartisan nature and alignment with the administration's goal to grow the number of apprenticeships.

The Senate committee's report, which includes detailed funding levels and policy directives, is available here. It includes language directing the Labor Secretary to resume background checks for Job Corps applicants and provide updates to the panel on the number of new students enrolled. The Labor Department had halted this security screening as part of its steps to wind down the Job Corps program over the past several months. More from Bloomberg Government.



ETA Makes \$30 Million Available in First Round of Industry-Driven Skills Training Grants

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) is inviting state workforce agencies to apply for grants from an initial round of the Industry-Driven Skills Training Fund. ETA will grant a total of \$30 million, of which \$5 million is earmarked for training in the shipbuilding industry. The remainder is intended to be aligned with the president's executive order on training for <a href="https://distriction.org/linearing-in-intended-to-be-aligned-with-the-president's executive order or <a href="https://distriction.org/linearing-in-intended-to-be-aligned-to-be-aligned-with-the-

Housing



Executive Order Seeks Major Shift in Federal Policies on Homelessness

President Trump signed a sweeping <u>executive order</u> that aims to reshape federal homelessness policy, emphasizing forced institutionalization over housing and supportive services. The order:

- Offers support to state and local governments for restoring civil commitment of individuals with serious mental illness, allowing involuntary institutionalization.
- Directs the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to cut funding for harm reduction programs, including needle exchanges and overdose prevention sites, and directs the Justice Department to investigate whether operators of such site can be sued or prosecuted.
- Directs federal agencies to priorities grants to state and local governments that take punitive action such as clearing encampments, banning public camping, or criminalizing homelessness.
- Prohibits federal funding for Housing First models, shifting focus toward abstinencebased and institutional responses.
- Instructs DOJ to assess whether federally detained homeless individuals qualify as "sexually dangerous persons."
- Mandates interagency data sharing, including sharing health data with law enforcement to coordinate "medical care and risk assessment."

Critics, such as the <u>National Homelessness Law Center</u>, have warned that the policy revives harmful, outdated institutional practices and undermines public health efforts by stigmatizing and criminalizing homelessness. More from <u>CNN</u>.

→ The executive order itself does not change existing policies but directs agencies to make changes to the programs and grants they administer in the weeks and months ahead. The order's provision that calls on the Attorney General to reverse judicial precedents

- that limit coerced institutionalization of individuals, will likely take longer as they rely on judicial decisions and will likely result in protracted litigation.
- → Consider assessing how the restrictions on, and prioritization of, certain funding streams will impact services at the local level and develop plans for how to mitigate potential funding losses.

Monitor

Key Senate Panel Advances Bipartisan Housing Bill

The Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee has unanimously advanced the bipartisan Renewing Opportunity in the American Dream (ROAD) to Housing Act of 2025 (<u>S. 5027</u>). This legislation, led by Sens. Tim Scott (R-S.C.) and Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), aims to expand the housing supply, improve affordability, and streamline federal housing regulations. It provides incentives to states and localities that work to reduce building costs, eliminate unnecessary zoning red tape, and enhance inspection efficiency. This bill would also:

- Expand and streamline federal housing programs
- Incentivize development in high-need areas
- Support reforms to help very low-income families and underserved communities, especially by easing restrictions that limit housing production

However, this legislation comes at a time when the White House is seeking dramatic funding and workforce cuts to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). More from the Senate Banking, Housing, & Urban Affairs Committee's <u>summary</u> and <u>The Hill</u>.



Judge Orders HUD to Resume Fair Housing Grants

A federal district judge ordered the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide a timeline for issuing fiscal year 2025 Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP) grants. The decision follows a class action lawsuit brought by fair housing organizations after HUD delayed release of the funds. The judge also granted a temporary restraining order requiring HUD to take immediate steps toward resuming the grant process, citing potential harm to communities relying on enforcement and education efforts. Advocates say the delay has stalled critical investigations into housing discrimination. More from <u>Bloomberg Government</u> and the <u>National Low Income Housing Coalition</u>.



Temporary and Narrow Reprieve in Lawsuit Against HUD Over Diversity-Related Restrictions

Eight of the 22 organizations that sued the Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Health and Human Services over new grant restrictions won a Temporary Restraining Order through August 11. They will be able to access Continuum of Care grant

awards without having to certify that they will not use funds to promote elective abortion, operate any programs that advance DEI, or promote so-called gender ideology as defined in President Trump's <u>executive order</u>. This narrow order does not impact any organizations in California, but the underlying litigation continues, and a final decision could have more sweeping implications. More from <u>Bloomberg Government</u>.



New HUD Regional Director Appointed

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Scott Turner announced the appointment of William Spencer as the Regional Administrator for the Pacific Region (Region IX), which includes California. Spencer served in the U.S. Navy for two decades and then founded a faith-based nonprofit in support of veterans and first responders. More from HUD's press release.

Immigration



Education Department Will Investigate Scholarships for DACA Students

The U.S. Department of Education has announced that it will investigate five universities that offer financial aid to students enrolled in Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), arguing that such scholarship programs violate civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination against national origin. None of the universities currently under investigation are in California, but the probe is an indication of additional executive actions to come. More from *The New York Times*.



Appeals Court Rules Against President's Birthright Citizenship Executive Order

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has upheld a lower court's ruling that the president's executive order that aims to curtail birthright citizenship is unconstitutional. This case was brought by the attorneys general of Washington, Arizona, Illinois, and Oregon against the administration and various federal agencies.

This ruling follows a separate nationwide injunction issued earlier this month by a federal judge in New Hampshire in a class action lawsuit filed by immigration rights advocates on behalf of children who would be denied U.S. citizenship if the executive order took effect. The White House has announced its plans to appeal this decision, setting the stage for a final showdown between the states and the White House at the Supreme Court. More from <u>CBS News</u>.