

## **Children at stake**

Should California's budget be balanced on the backs of our children? Certainly not. Yet that is exactly what Gov. Schwarzenegger proposes.

The governor wants to deny health insurance for more than 7,000 San Luis Obispo County children by eliminating the Healthy Families program for working families and increasing unnecessary paperwork for children on Medi-Cal. The governor will cut off more than a third of SLO's children who rely on these programs for immunizations, well-baby check-ups, asthma medications, hospitalizations and dental care.

These cuts will mean sicker children, more lost days at school and more crowded emergency rooms. And California will forfeit \$685 million in federal Healthy Families funds. As unemployment rises and children need more assistance, such draconian measures are foolish.

Recent polls show that seven out of 10 California voters oppose cutting state funding for health care services. Similar majorities support raising taxes on tobacco and imposing oil extraction taxes on oil companies. Strong majorities also support increasing income tax brackets for the highest income earners and closing property tax loopholes that benefit corporations.

The electorate has told the governor and the Legislature to do their jobs. They did not tell them to jeopardize the health of our future generation.

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