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**Press Statement attributed to Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability: Gov. Gavin Newsom's May Budget Revision**

We are in unprecedented times. We agree with Gov. Newsom: our fiscal plan must shift to meet these times. Low-income communities and people of color are disproportionately impacted by health, economic, environmental and climate crises. The COVID-19 crisis is no different nor is the climate crisis we are still facing. We encourage Gov. Newsom to view this moment in history as an opportunity to meet the moment to spark a climate-centered recovery - a just transition - that invests in and is led by the most vulnerable communities in our state.

While we are encouraged by the budget revision's attempt to protect the Community Air Quality Protection Program and the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund, we urge Gov. Newsom to ensure the final 2020-21 budget adequately responds to short- and long-term economic relief opportunities.

Moving forward from the May Revise, Gov. Gavin Newsom's actions must match his words and sentiment. He is right to prioritize public health, public safety and the families hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic, but in the long term, what form does this take?

In the short term, the budget must prioritize living wages and benefits, protective gear and the general health of essential workers; address the threat of eviction that families feel as bills mount; and, ensure access to health care, which is incredibly unequal.

Now is the time to invest in the development and implementation of community-identified programs, including projects to improve air quality, water quality, climate resilience and access to housing and green space.

We look forward to working with the governor on a budget that focuses on the future, way beyond this pandemic.

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