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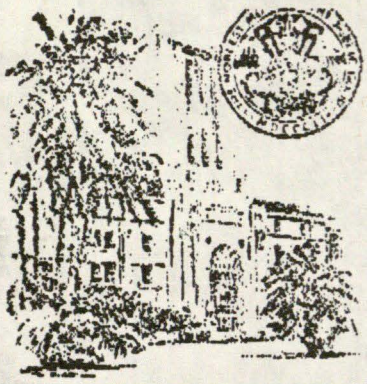

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SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAY EMERGENCIES

July 26, 1990

The Honorable George Deukmejian
Governor of the State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Deukmejian,

This letter is to express, on behalf of the County of San Diego, continued strong support for the retention of education services as a primary, early component of the Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN) program.

After nearly three years operating GAIN in San Diego County, we have witnessed the significant, positive impacts that GAIN education services have had on thousands of participants and their families. For many jobless welfare recipients, the GAIN education component offers a crucial second chance to obtain the essential basic education or high school diploma that was missed in their youth. GAIN provides an opportunity for welfare recipients, mostly single mothers, to escape the bonds of ignorance and despair, to expand their horizons, and to envision a future for themselves and their families that is free of poverty.

The provision of GAIN education services prior to Job Search activities better prepares participants to compete in the labor market. In San Diego the average length of time to complete Adult Basic Education or General Education Development (GED) preparation is 3 1/2 months. With basic skills or a GED, participants are able to obtain better jobs and to retain their jobs for a longer period of time. Those who don't get jobs are better equipped to access and complete training programs which, without up front education, would have been beyond their grasp.

Another benefit of the GAIN education component has been its profound impact on participants' families. Many GAIN enrollees have reported significant improvements in their children's performance in school. Parents begin to place a greater value on education. They become able, often for the first time, to help their children with homework. This shared valuing of education is likely to pay dividends for generations to come.

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While research findings on the cost effectiveness of the GAIN program are not yet available, early indications in this county support the view that the GAIN education component is a worthwhile investment. Any final determination must take into account more than the tangible benefits of GAIN education services such as enhanced employability, increased earnings and increased AFDC grant savings. Of equal value are those intangible benefits including enhanced confidence, the long-term impacts on families, and the impacts on society resulting from the development of better educated citizens.

Therefore, on behalf of the County of San Diego, I urge you to support the retention of GAIN education services as a primary component for participants who lack basic skills or a high school diploma. This essential investment in human capital will, I believe, prove cost-effective in the long term while helping to break the cycle of poverty and dependence for a great many California families.

Sincerely,

LEON L. WILLIAMS, Chairman
Board of Supervisors

LLW/bt

Attachment

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

GAIN PROGRAM ACTIVITIES SUMMARY

PROGRAM ACTIVITY	PROGRAM TOTALS 7/1/89 - 6/30/90	PROGRAM TOTALS 10/1/87 - 6/30/90
Completed Orientation:	9,868	32,641
Mandatory	7,204	28,106
Voluntary	2,664	4,535
Enrolled in Component:		
Assessment	1,604	3,371
Education (ABE, GED, ESL)	3,551	7,104
Job Club	2,965	8,536
Job Search	197	980
PREP	297	592
Voc. Ed and Training	1,830	2,353
Self-Initiated Program	1,411	4,084
Entered Employment:	7,901	20,758
Unsubsidized	7,887	20,476
Subsidized	42	310
AFDC Grant Savings due to Employment:	$ 22,245,300	$52,315,891
AFDC Cases Closed due to Employment:	677	2,382
Enrolled in Teen Parent Project:	371	543*

* Teen Parent Project began 5/1/88