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**DATE:** April 15, 2009  
**TO:** Joint Finance Committee  
**FROM:** Charity Eleson, Executive Director  
**RE:** Paper #175, Additional GPR Reductions to Several Agencies

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**Please restore the \$5.9 million cut per year in Community Youth and Family Aids**

The Governor’s budget reduces funding by \$4.9 million per year on top of the 1 percent across the board cut to Community Youth and Family Aids at the Department of Corrections. This total amount of \$5.9 million per year means a 6 percent reduction to Youth Aids overall. We are asking that you oppose these cuts and restore full funding to Youth Aids.

This 6 percent cut puts a severe strain on counties and makes it difficult to continue prevention and early intervention programs that identify children at risk and intervene to strengthen the skills of children and their families. Counties have developed a range of programs such as providing volunteer programs that link juveniles at risk with adult mentors, providing individual counseling and treatment programs, and developing intensive in-home family treatment programs, all of which successfully divert youth from further delinquency involvement and other risky behaviors. Counties have, over time, picked up an increasing share of the burden of providing these services to youth and families, and making cuts in funding for these efforts will increase costs in the long run to the state as well as counties as the pipeline of troubled teens who are likely to end up in the adult correctional system increases.

With the weak economy, counties are seeing an increased demand for services. Also, counties are dealing with other cuts and levy limits and need this \$5.9 million to maintain these important services for our youth and communities.