



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 26, 2018

Media Contact

Christine Lollar, Communications and Media Specialist
661 304 0970 cell; clollar@kccfc.org

First 5 Kern to Celebrate 20th Anniversary at State Capitol on May 2nd
Three legislators to receive awards for backing bills benefitting young kids

SACRAMENTO –First 5 Kern will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the statewide First 5 network with a Family Fun Day and awards presentation on May 2nd at the capitol steps.

First 5, which was created in 1998 when California voters passed Proposition 10 and operates in all 58 counties, will celebrate the local partners and state legislators who support its mission of ensuring California’s kids thrive. Kids’ games, a visit from Sesame Street’s Walkaround Rosita, and appearances by several state legislators will mark the event.

Roland Maier, Executive Director of First 5 Kern shared “We are pleased to launch our 20th anniversary alongside the 58 First 5 Counties. Now more than ever, we believe that California’s success will be measured one day by the success of its youngest children.” First 5 Kern is planning to celebrate the event as “Birthday to Kern County Families” in the fall.

Assemblymembers Cecilia Aguiar-Curry (D-Winters), Joaquin Arambula (D-Fresno), and Kevin McCarty (D-Sacramento) will receive Champion for Children Awards for prioritizing young children. The legislators are backing efforts this session to increase pay and recruitment of child care providers (Aguiar-Curry, AB 2292); bolster home visiting for CalWORKs families with small children (Arambula, AB 992); and advance more rigorous developmental screening practices (McCarty, AB 11). Senator Mike McGuire (D-North Coast), a former First 5 commissioner, will also receive a Champion for Children award earlier in the day. Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, D-Lakewood, will deliver the keynote for the awards program.

“Our kids are our collective future. These legislators’ commitment to the wellbeing of California’s youngest children is a step in the right direction,” said Moira Kenney, Executive Director of First 5 Association, which represents First 5s in the state’s 58 counties. “Families are struggling across our state—with poverty, quality child care, and access to early intervention services. By supporting kids in the early years, we can shape the course of their lives—and our society.”

###

First 5 Kern was established in 1998 when California voters passed Proposition 10, which levied a 50-cent tax on tobacco products. Revenues generated from the tobacco tax are used to fund local programs in the areas of health and wellness, early childcare and education, and parent education and support services that promote early childhood development for children ages zero to five.

California voters passed Proposition 10 in 1998 creating First 5 commissions in all 58 counties and a state commission to support the healthy development of children from birth to age five. Together, First 5 touches the lives of more than one million kids, families, and caregivers each year, and strengthens our state by giving kids the best start in life. Learn more: www.first5association.org.

For more information on the First 5 Kern and its work, please log onto its website at www.First5Kern.org or follow the agency @First5Kern on social media sites.

END