



# CALIFORNIA TRIBAL FAMILIES COALITION

## 2022 Legal Counsel for Tribes Budget Proposal *Fixing a Fundamental Inequity in Indian Child Welfare* FACT SHEET

Assembly Member Ramos has authored a 2022 budget proposal for the Legal Counsel for Tribes Project, with the support of the California Tribal Families Coalition. The following outlines the reasons this budget proposal is needed. Please visit <https://caltribalfamilies.org/legislation/> for a template support letter and instructions.

- 1) Tribes are the only party that do not have publicly funded legal representation in state Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) cases.
- 2) Research and data make it clear, families in the foster care system do better when their tribe is in the courtroom. Tribal children spend over 100 fewer days in foster care when their tribe is involved early in their case.
- 3) Too few cases successfully transfer from state court to tribal court. LC4T will increase the number of cases that are transferred to tribal court when legally possible. When more cases move from state court to tribal court, more tribal families will receive culturally relevant services and support for family reunification.
- 4) California has twice as many ICWA case appeals that go up to District Courts than all other states - *combined!* With highly trained attorneys for tribes in the state courtroom, the mistakes that prompt these appeals will decrease and state resources will be saved.
- 5) LC4T attorneys will be highly trained on ICWA to ensure the best outcomes for families and tribes and, further, LC4T will save the overburdened state child welfare system by having children reach permanency sooner, transferring more cases to tribal court and decreasing the number of ICWA appeals.
- 6) LC4T will harness existing state and federal funding streams to solve a glaring inequity in the child welfare system by providing a resource for every tribe in California to be represented in state court ICWA cases.

### OUR MISSION

To promote and protect the health, safety and welfare of tribal children and families, which are inherent tribal governmental functions and are at the core of tribal sovereignty and tribal governance.

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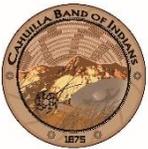
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