

Schwarzenegger expected to approve emergency funding for domestic violence shelters

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Oakland Tribune

Posted: 10/14/2009 05:59:42 PM PDT

Updated: 10/15/2009 06:24:25 AM PDT

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A bill to provide emergency funding for California's domestic violence shelters passed the Legislature on Wednesday and next will require approval from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The bill was prompted by Schwarzenegger's using a line-item veto in July to cut all of the state's \$16.3 million in annual funding to those shelters.

Since then, six of the state's 94 shelters closed their doors, and a few more stand on the brink of doing the same in the next couple of weeks, according to Camille Hayes, spokeswoman for the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence.

"The governor absolutely supports restoring funding to this program and is expected to sign this bill," Schwarzenegger spokesman Aaron McLearn said. "But the Legislature needs to find a permanent funding source for this program."

Sen. Leland Yee, D-San Francisco, authored the bill to restore one year's worth of emergency funding to the shelters. It passed the Assembly with almost no

opposition in September but stalled in the Senate when Republican senators declined to vote on any bill requiring a two-thirds majority to pass.

At the time, Senate Republican Leader Dennis Hollingsworth said Democrats had not lived up to good-faith agreements made in the state budget negotiations, adding, "In order for us to achieve bipartisan agreements that benefit all Californians, we have to establish and maintain a level of trust that a deal is a deal."

Since then, Republicans and Democrats were able to solve the differences they had, according to spokesman Hector Barajas of Hollingsworth's office.

H.D. Palmer, deputy director of the state Department of Finance, said in August that the governor "played the hand he was dealt with reluctance but out of necessity. It was in no way a comment on the value of these programs. He was put in this position because the budget he got had a reserve that was wiped out, upside down and out of balance."

If approved, the bill would allow the state's general fund to borrow \$16.3 million from the Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Fund, requiring that it be repaid with interest over the next three years.

Even if Schwarzenegger signs the bill, immediately releasing funding back to the shelters, "the struggle is ongoing," Hayes said. "This is only a temporary fix. This money is for one year only. What the governor did with his line-item veto was completely eliminate funding, so we need to keep working on this."

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