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## For Immediate Release

### Call for Recognition and Increased Support for CALD Communities in WA State Budget

The Ethnic Communities Council of Western Australia (ECCWA) respectfully expresses its concern regarding the lack of specific budget allocations for culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities in the recently announced WA state budget for 2024-25. While we acknowledge the significant investments made in health, education, housing, and infrastructure, we believe there is an urgent need for dedicated funding to address the unique challenges faced by our diverse communities.

CALD communities form a vital part of Western Australia's population, contributing significantly as voters, taxpayers, and active participants in the state's social and economic fabric. Despite the comprehensive nature of the state budget, it is disheartening to see that specific needs of CALD communities have not been adequately addressed. The record \$3.2 billion investment in the health system, for instance, lacks targeted health programs that cater to the unique health challenges and barriers faced by CALD individuals. Similarly, the \$1.1 billion allocated for housing and homelessness does not address the specific housing issues encountered by CALD communities, such as language barriers and potential discrimination in the housing market. Additionally, the \$1.3 billion investment in education and training initiatives does not include programs designed to support CALD students and adults, particularly in language acquisition and employment training.

As an organisation representing the interests of CALD communities, we respectfully urge the WA Government to recognise the importance of specific budgetary allocations for these communities. It is essential to enhance support services by increasing funding for healthcare, mental health, education, and employment services tailored to CALD individuals. Furthermore, promoting community safety and well-being through targeted initiatives, such as water safety education programs, is crucial to prevent tragedies and ensure the health and safety of CALD community members. Additionally, investments in training, job placement, and entrepreneurial support programs are necessary to boost the economic contributions of CALD communities.

The ECCWA remains committed to advocating for the rights and needs of CALD communities in Western Australia. We believe that with the appropriate recognition and support, CALD communities can continue to thrive and contribute positively to the state's development. We look forward to engaging constructively with the WA Government to ensure that future budgets reflect the diverse needs of all Western Australians.

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