

CCoA
California Commission on Aging

AGEWATCH

Final state budget includes “one-time-only” increases for home and community-based aging services

Governor Jerry Brown this week approved a state budget for 2016-2017 that totals \$167 billion and provides substantial increases for education and infrastructure improvements. As described in the State Department of Finance’s budget summary, the coming fiscal year’s budget also “prepares the state” for the next recession by raising the Rainy Day Fund balance to \$6.7 billion and placing strict limits on new expenditures. Most of the new spending included in the budget is through “one-time-only” expenditures for major projects like affordable housing, drought response, and state office building repairs.

In the aging services program arena, modest one-time-only funding increases were approved for just a handful of the community-based programs still hoping to recover from budget cuts made during the recession.

Among those one-time increases are:

- \$2 million for home-delivered meals;
- \$1 million for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman;
- \$3 million for training Adult Protective Service workers;
- \$2.5 million for early detection and treatment of Alzheimer’s disease; and
- a one-time appropriation of \$500,000 for the California Senior Legislature.

This year’s budget also restores a cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) for the State Supplementary Payment program for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients. The 2.76% COLA is supported through a General Fund allocation of \$36.5 million in the coming fiscal year and by \$74.8 million in 2017-18.

Also receiving “one-time-only” funds are the state’s affordable housing programs, which serve older adults as well as low-income families, with \$400 million going toward affordable housing projects that must be approved through a streamlined “by right” process. A program focused on supportive housing for homeless mentally ill individuals will receive over \$1.8 billion in the new budget for construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of supportive housing for the chronically homeless.

Of significant benefit to the survivors of deceased Medi-Cal beneficiaries is the inclusion of \$5.7 million for 2016-17 and \$28.9 million in ongoing funds. The appropriations enable the state to limit Medi-Cal estate recovery to only those assets required for recovery by federal law.

To read the Dept. of Finance budget summary or view budget detail, visit www.dof.ca.gov.

AGE WATCH is an occasional publication of the California Commission on Aging (CCoA) intended to inform, educate, and advocate. The CCoA is an independent state agency established in 1973 to serve as the principal state advocate on behalf of older Californians. The CCoA office is located at 1300 National Drive, Suite 173, Sacramento, CA 95834. (916) 419-7591

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Mixed response to federal budget proposals; SHIP and SCSEP funding at risk

Advocates for the aging are urging the House Appropriations Committee to reject several provisions of the Senate Appropriations Committee's Older Americans Act funding bill when the House drafts its own 2017 funding bill later this month.

Raising significant alarm are two propped reductions, including a potential cut of \$34.4 million from the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) and the total elimination of the State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) budget of \$52.1 million.

SHIP funding is distributed nationwide by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to provide free comprehensive counseling and advocacy for older adults and persons with disabilities seeking information and guidance on Medicare coverage. California's HICAP (Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program) is dependent upon SHIP funding to provide these services, which include assistance with billing problems, Medicare appeals, and help choosing prescription drug coverage.



HICAP counseling for Medicare beneficiaries could be in jeopardy if the U.S. Senate recommendation to cut all SHIP funds is adopted by the House of Representatives.

The low-cost program operates with limited staffing and trained volunteers and has been an essential service in helping older adults with the increasingly complex Medicare system. HICAP is also a primary source of information and assistance for "dual eligible" beneficiaries living in the state's 7 Coordinated Care Initiative pilot counties.

The loss of federal funds could mean a 50% cut in funding for HICAPs in the state.

The SCSEP program provides service-based training for low-income seniors over 55 who have few job prospects but also need employment.

On the positive side, the Senate bill proposes level funding for a majority of OAA programs, with appropriations of \$834.8 million for Title 3 nutrition programs, \$5 million for ACL and \$2.1 million for the CDC for Falls Prevention activities, and \$8 million for Chronic Disease Self Management and Education. The Senate bill also proposes continuing the \$347.7 million appropriation for supportive services and senior centers.

Funding increases proposed in the Senate bill include an additional \$2 million for Elder Justice efforts, raising the total appropriation to \$10 million, and a \$2 million increase for the Senior Medicare Patrol bringing the total to \$13.9 million. The Senate also approved \$2 billion in additional funds for the National Institutes of Health, which includes an increase of \$400 million for the National Institute on Aging for Alzheimer's disease research. A chart of the Senate's OAA funding proposals can be found [here](#).

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies is expected to consider the OAA funding bill in the next few weeks.

N4a Policy & Advocacy, *Advocacy Urgently Needed to Stop Senate Elimination of SHIPs* 6/23/2016.

Kathy Greenlee Announces Departure from ACL

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Kathy Greenlee, Administrator of the Administration for Community Living (ACL) and Assistant Secretary for Aging, announced this week that she will be leaving ACL at the end of July. "This has been a wonderful experience and an extremely rewarding seven years. And as I told the ACL team, I am proud of what we have done together. We have brought our communities together in a way that gives us a larger voice and more influence, and ultimately makes us more successful as advocates." Edwin Walker, who currently serves as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aging, will assume the roles of Acting Administrator of ACL and Acting Assistant Secretary for Aging.



Assistant Secretary for Aging Kathy Greenlee addressed the California Commission on Aging in 2013.

Greenlee is highly regarded as a champion on elder abuse issues, raising the profile of the growing phenomenon through her work at ACL both in Washington and around the country.

Greenlee was appointed by President Obama as Assistant Secretary for Aging at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and confirmed by the Senate in June 2009. Prior to her tenure at ACL, Greenlee served as Secretary of Aging in Kansas, and before that as the Kansas State Long Term Care Ombudsman. She also served as the General Counsel of the Kansas Insurance Department and served as Chief of Staff and Chief of Operations for then-Governor Kathleen Sebelius.

In a statement released by the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD), Executive Director Martha Roherty said "NASUAD is grateful for the dedication and hard work Kathy has put in during her tenure, especially her commitment to elder justice. She is a visionary leader and has transformed how services are provided to older adults and individuals with disabilities."

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