

April 5, 2024

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**THE HONORABLE BUFFY WICKS, CHAIR  
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

Re: **ASSEMBLY BILL 1993 – CCoA Sponsor**

Dear Chair Wicks,

I am writing on behalf of the California Commission on Aging (CCoA) in **sponsorship of AB 1993 (Katra)** as introduced on January 30, 2024, which would expand the number of individuals that Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFEs) can serve.

CCoA is established in state statute as an independent advisory body and principal advocate before the Governor, the Legislature, and State and federal agencies on behalf of California's older adults. Commission members represent the state's cultural and geographic diversity, including professional expertise within and outside of the field of aging. We stand in strong support of this legislation which will provide additional capacity for smaller RCFEs to care for more older adults.

RCFEs provide 24-hour supervised non-medical care for adults aged 60 and over who cannot live independently but still want to live within the community of their choice. These facilities vary in size, ranging from smaller facilities operating within single-family homes to large facilities housing 200 or more residents. Smaller facilities, often preferred for their intimate setting, are not able to utilize possible capacity due to antiquated and arbitrary capacity limits enforced at the local level.

Under state law, an RCFE with six residents or less must be treated as a residential use of property for the purposes of zoning and local ordinances. An RCFE that cares for more than six residents is often subject to a conditional use permit, where approval from a local entity is required before the RCFE can operate. Thus, a six-bed facility's ability to expand is held at the discretion of a local zoning and planning authority and not by an authority that judges the ability of the RCFE to care for its residents.

AB 1993 would amend the RCFE Act to enable small RCFEs to expand the number of individuals they can serve by replacing the number of residents that triggers local discretionary review from six to ten. This change would allow small RCFE operators to serve more older individuals consistent with Department of Social Services (CDSS) regulations and standard building codes. Allowing smaller RCFEs to serve more than six residents can help open more needed spots at assisted living homes to serve a growing aging population. CDSS would still be responsible for ensuring that the RCFE is able to meet the care and housing standards they require in their regulations to operate and would set the RCFE's capacity based on these standards.



Karol Swartzlander, Executive Director  
Gavin Newsom, Governor

The growth in the older adult population will increase the demand for housing services that provide a level of care. Existing solutions are available to house older adults in a community setting. However, without additional flexibility, the ability to utilize these solutions may be unfeasible in the near future. With older Californians comprising the fastest growing population of unhoused adults in the state, we must recognize that solutions to homelessness will require addressing the specialized needs of an older population. CCoA believes we must act to ensure the viability of RCFEs to help meet the needs of older adults in California.

We urge your support as the Chair of the Assembly Committee on Appropriations.

If you have any questions, you may contact me or Karol Swartzlander, CCoA Executive Director, at [karol.swartzlander@cco.ca.gov](mailto:karol.swartzlander@cco.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cheryl Brown".

Cheryl Brown, Chair  
California Commission on Aging