



Karol Swartzlander, Executive Director
Gavin Newsom, Governor

March 22, 2024

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**THE HONORABLE MARIE ALVARADO-GIL, Chair
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

Re: **SENATE BILL 1249 (ROTH) – CCoA Sponsored**

Dear Chair Alvarado-Gil,

I am writing on behalf of the California Commission on Aging (CCoA) in **sponsorship of SB 1249 (Roth)**, as introduced on February 15, 2024, which modernizes the network which provides services for older Californians.

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 advances priorities of the California Master Plan for Aging by modernizing and strengthening California's aging services network in preparation for 2030 when one quarter of the state's population will be 60 years of age or older.

California's aging network is comprised of 33 Planning and Service Areas (PSAs), each with its own Area Agency on Aging (AAA). This network of 33 local AAAs has remained largely unchanged since its inception nearly 50 years ago, despite the older adult population – and their needs, changing dramatically. Today, and into the future, California must proactively plan for increasing racial, ethnic, language, and sexual orientation-gender identity diversity; widening income gaps; rising rates of Alzheimer's disease; and changing family supports.

On February 6, 2024, the federal Administration for Community Living released a final rule updating Older Americans Act (OAA) programs regulations that, among other things, clarified requirements for states to develop, in consultation with Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and other stakeholders, programmatic and fiscal performance measures, for services and activities performed by AAAs. States must achieve compliance by October 2025. Therefore, modifying statute in the current legislative session is critical.

SB 1249 updates the Older Californians Act to ensure conformity with these new federal regulations. Specifically, the bill requires California Department of Aging (CDA) to develop performance metrics and core programs and also clarifies the right of counties to petition CDA to operate their AAA. This bill builds on prior collaborative efforts to develop an ideal aging network by explicitly requiring in statute that CDA consult with AAAs and stakeholders on key elements of the proposal.



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CCoA believes updating the system that provides necessary services to millions of older adults is integral to preparing for the demographic shifts coming in the next decade. SB 1249 ushers in a new era of a future-ready California aging network -- one that is inclusive and equitable, consistent, locally responsive, integrated, and performance-based. Older adults, people with disabilities, and family caregivers in our state deserve nothing less.

We urge your support as the Chair of the Senate Committee on Human Services.

If you have any questions, you may contact me or Karol Swartzlander, CCoA Executive Director, at karol.swartzlander@ccoa.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

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

Cheryl Brown, Chair
California Commission on Aging