



Karol Swartzlander, Executive Director
Gavin Newsom, Governor

March 18, 2025

Assembly Member Corey Jackson, Chair
Assembly Budget Sub Committee #2 Human Services
State Capitol, Room 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for \$150M One-Time Budget Request for the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP)

Dear Honorable Chair,

On behalf of the California Commission on Aging (CCoA), I respectfully request that the Subcommittee hear and consider a one-time \$150 million budget request to fund the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP). This investment is essential to maintaining and expanding California's ability to provide targeted, person-centered housing and disability advocacy services to older adults and individuals with disabilities who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Established under the Older Californians Act, the CCoA serves 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. Our Commission represents the State's cultural and geographic diversity, with members who are consumers, providers of aging services, researchers, and academicians, bringing decades of expertise within and beyond the aging field.

According to the California Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS), 48% of individuals experiencing homelessness and accessing services have a disabling condition, and 19.5% are over the age of 55. Additionally, older adults are the fastest-growing population experiencing homelessness, as documented by UCSF's California Statewide Study for People Experiencing Homelessness. This growing crisis underscores the need for housing programs explicitly designed to meet the unique needs of older adults and individuals with disabilities, who often face additional challenges and inequities in service delivery systems.

Since HDAP's implementation in 2017, the program has demonstrated strong and improving outcomes. Exits to permanent housing have increased year over year, with 50% of HDAP participants achieving permanent housing in FY 2023-24—far surpassing the 35% housing exit rate for participants receiving services through California's local homeless response systems. Additionally, 43% of HDAP participants in FY 2023-24 experienced chronic homelessness, demonstrating the program's effectiveness in serving those with the greatest need.

HDAP's success is driven by its ability to provide comprehensive, wraparound support, including disability benefits advocacy, housing navigation, and case management. Due

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to the prior year's investments, local programs have a cadre of highly trained staff skilled in working with an often-challenging population. However, without additional funding, the program's reach will be severely limited, necessitating the closing of county and tribal programs and a severe reduction of this specialized staff. **CDSS projects that in FY 2025-26, HDAP will only be able to serve 9,472 participants due to remaining limited funds—representing a 41.06% decrease in the number of individuals served compared to FY 2023-24.**

HDAP was created in 2017 to address the overlapping needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness who are likely eligible for disability benefits and in need of housing support. With ongoing annual appropriations of \$25 million and additional one-time funds, HDAP has expanded to more counties and tribal communities, serving 30,258 individuals and permanently housing 8,230 since its inception. Currently, HDAP and the Home Safe program serve 18% of older adults over 55 receiving homelessness services in California's local response systems.

Despite its success, the program faces a funding cliff. Once the two prior tranches of \$150 million in one-time HDAP funds are exhausted, counties will see an 80% reduction in available funding, returning to a portion of the \$25 million in annual, ongoing statewide funding. This 80% reduction estimate is conservative, as the number of HDAP county and tribal grantees has increased from 42 to 74, spreading limited resources even thinner.

Sufficient ongoing funding is essential for counties and tribal communities to implement long-term planning, institutionalize proven service models, and coordinate effectively with other homelessness response systems. Increased funding will allow HDAP grantees to provide critical, evidence-based, wraparound services tailored to the needs of older adults and individuals with disabilities who are at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness.

This one-time investment of \$150 million, available for encumbrance or expenditure until June 30, 2028, will increase participation among homeless individuals with disabilities who may be eligible for disability benefits under Section 18999.1 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. It is imperative that we continue to build on HDAP's success and prevent devastating service reductions that would harm California's most vulnerable residents.

We recognize the challenges associated with budget allocations and fiscal responsibilities. However, by 2030—just five years from now—the oldest baby boomers will turn 85 when many require the most long-term care services. We appreciate the difficult decisions involved in crafting the budget and are grateful for your commitment to programs that positively impact our aging population. By prioritizing proven initiatives like HDAP (82% of participants retained permanent housing after twelve months), we can build a financially sustainable system of care with fully resourced safety net programs.

Please support this one-time budget request and prioritize HDAP in the Subcommittee's deliberations. Your leadership and commitment to addressing homelessness and ensuring housing stability for individuals with disabilities and older adults is essential to protecting California's most vulnerable residents and upholding the State's commitment to aging with dignity.



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The Commission stands ready to partner with the administration and its agencies and departments. We look forward to your continued leadership and support for the welfare of older adults, individuals with disabilities, and their caregivers.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to working together to advance this critical investment in our long-term care infrastructure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Lindeman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. David Lindeman
Chair
California Commission on Aging