



Karol Swartzlander, Executive Director  
Gavin Newsom, Governor

## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 21, 2025

### **Part I: Legislative Outreach “AGING & DISABILITY ISSUES: WHAT LEGISLATIVE STAFF NEED TO KNOW FOR 2025”**

- 1) **Welcome** – David Lindeman, CCoA Chair  
Chair Lindeman welcomed the participants and attendees and highlighted the day’s activities.
- 2) **CCoA’s Key Priorities for 2025**  
Executive Director Swartzlander welcomed those in attendance and highlighted recent CCoA activities and accomplishments, including the 50th Anniversary Gala. Swartzlander provided an update on the Master Plan on Aging and discussed CCoA policy priorities.
- 3) **Older Adult and Adults with Disabilities: Stakeholders, Providers, Subject Matter Experts: Presentations**
  - a) **Leza Coleman**, Legislative Director, California Commission on Aging  
Leza Coleman discussed CCoA’s current and upcoming efforts concerning legislation and the proposed Governor’s Budget, including efforts in securing additional funding for the Home Safe Program, the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP); and the Community Care Expansion (CCE) Program.
  - b) **Debbie Toth**, President & CEO, Choice in Aging  
Debbie Toth welcomed the group and provided a background on Choice in Aging’s two adult day health care programs in Pleasant Hill and Antioch. She also discussed the expansion of the Multipurpose Senior Services Program for Contra Costa, Napa, and Solano Counties, the California Community Transitions project in Contra Costa, Solano, and Sacramento Counties, and the Prevention and Early Access Program for Seniors in Solano.
  - c) **Mariya Kalina**, Executive Director, California Collaborative for Long Term Services and Supports (CCLTSS)  
Mariya Kalina discussed CCLTSS’s three priorities for action, including: expanding access to affordable and high-quality long-term services and supports; strengthening the LTSS workforce and empowering family caregivers to ensure compassionate, high-quality, and effective care; and prioritizing older and disabled adults in Housing Policy. She stressed the need for support for the Home Safe Program.

- d) **Yasmin Peled**, Senior Policy Advocate, Justice in Aging  
Yasmin Peled introduced Justice in Aging and their primary issue areas, including--but not limited to--long-term care, home and community-based services, housing and homelessness, economic security, and elder justice. She also reviewed their 2025 priorities, including protecting Medicaid, fully implementing Medi-Cal share of cost reform, reinstating the SSI cost-of-living adjustment, and older adult homelessness prevention.
- e) **Dan Okenfuss**, Public Policy Manager, California Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC)  
Dan Okenfuss presented CFILC's mission, membership, and advocacy efforts. He emphasized their top priority in 2025 is a budget request for funding of Aging and Disability Resource Connections (ADRCs), a key program of the Master Plan for Aging.
- f) **Donata Bohanec**, Executive Director, California Elder Justice Coalition (CEJC)  
Donata Bohanec provided a background of CEJC and the broad range of elder justice policy issues they respond to including access to resources, respect for personal autonomy, and protection of elder rights. She highlighted the need to strengthen responses to elder financial exploitation, including scams, fraud, cyber- and crypto-crimes.
- g) **Jenna Shankman**, Policy Specialist, Family Caregiver Alliance and California Coalition on Family Caregiving  
Jenna Shankman provided a background of the California Coalition on Family Caregiving which advocates for policies and services on behalf of caregivers and their beneficiaries. The primary focus has been on expanding paid family leave access. She emphasized that family caregivers provide \$81 billion in unpaid care a year, provided examples of the complexity of services provided, and noted the impact on middle-income households with income too high to qualify for Medi-Cal.
- h) **Jason Sullivan-Halpern**, Association Director, California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association (CLTCOA)  
Jason Sullivan-Halpern explained the role of an ombudsman in protecting residents in long-term care, and the Association's priorities in 2025. These include increasing funding for all 35 LTC Ombudsman Programs and ensuring that skilled nursing facilities provide notices of transfers or discharges in the primary language of residents. He also noted that this year CLTCOA will focus on legislation that, among other things, prevents and prosecutes older abuse and neglect, regulates quality of care in assisted living facilities, and advances the goals in the Master Plan for Aging.
- i) **Nina Weiler-Harwell**, Associate Director Advocacy & Community Engagement, AARP  
Nina Weiler-Harwell provided a background on the efforts and focus of AARP, particularly on affordable housing. She stressed the need for energy affordability.



Karol Swartzlander, Executive Director  
Gavin Newsom, Governor

- j) **Christina Mills**, Executive Director, California Association of Area Agencies on Aging  
Christina Mills discussed the role and importance of C4A and their 2025 policy priorities which include expanding ADRC programs throughout the state, additional caregiver support, and housing assistance, including a monthly subsidy for those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.
  
- k) **Maria Aliferis-Gjerde**, Executive Officer, California Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities  
Maria Aliferis-Gjerde highlighted the Committee's goals to improve benefits and remove barriers, their continued work on workforce and employment and training programs for people with disabilities, and their support of efforts toward long-term services and supports.
  
- l) **Public Comment**  
Topics discussed included:
  - Accessible transportation, efforts to establish new long-term care facilities
  - The connection between the California Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities and the Department of Rehabilitation's vocational education program (both housed within DOR and funded through EDD)
  - Reintegration of older adult individuals released from prison
  - Wheelchair accessibility
  - Initiatives regarding older farm workers
  - Funds for fire victims

## **Part II: Commission Business Meeting**

- 4) **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**  
Chair Lindeman called the meeting to order at 11:35 am.
  
- 5) **Roll Call and Establish a Quorum**  
**Commissioners present:** Commissioner Meador  
**Commissioners virtual:** Adelman, Cislowski, Davis, Frank, Goodall, Jauregui, Jensen, Lindeman, Lyford, Martin, Perry, Qazi, Schmeding, Toppel  
**Commissioners absent:** Commissioners Lyford, Campos, and Castile  
**Staff present:** Karol Swartzlander, Leza Coleman, Marijke Melman, Patrick Smith, Peter Anderson  
**A quorum was established.**
  
- 6) **Approve the CCoA General Meeting Minutes from October 21, 2024**  
M/S/C (Adelman/Toppel)  
**TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 21 GM MINUTES.**  
**APPROVED.**



Karol Swartzlander, Executive Director  
Gavin Newsom, Governor

## 7) Chair's Comments

Commissioner Lindeman welcomed new Commissioners Jeanne Parker Martin, a Governor appointee, and Dr. Lenore Tate, appointed by Speaker Rivas. He thanked outgoing Chair Cheryl Brown for her leadership and dedication to serving older adults, individuals with disabilities, and caregivers in California.

CCoA is piloting new meeting procedures to allow for more discussion and focus on urgent matters. This includes written instead of oral committee reports now incorporated in the meeting agenda. Commissioners may ask questions about the reports during the meeting. New policies and procedures for the Legislative Advisory Committee have been established for conducting meetings and sponsoring legislation. The process will be iterative, and we will continue to adjust as needed. All Commissioners are encouraged to bring forward legislative concepts using the template documents.

## 8) CCoA Committee Reports

Chair Lindeman announced that moving forward, updates and reports from individual stakeholder advisory committees, CCoA committees, and subcommittees will be provided in writing in advance of the meeting.

### a) Executive Committee

Chair Lindeman reported that the EC met on December 20, 2024, and reviewed recommendations from the Legislative Advocacy Committee, as well as actions to promote CCoA, including but not limited to submitting a letter in response to the Governor's proposed 2025-26 budget, the third annual What Legislators Need to Know event and the March 2025 Legislative Lunch and legislative visits. Commissioners discussed how the Commission could engage in federal advocacy, given time/staff restraints.

### b) Behavioral Health Committee

Commissioner Frank reported the Behavioral Health Committee met on November 20, 2024. Smith prepared analyses and led discussions about exploring the opportunity to increase options for behavioral health services delivery in long-term care settings. Discussions focus on training needs for staffing in SNF's and RCFE's and quality of care. In addition, feedback was provided on Part 1 and Part 2 of the Behavioral Health Transformation Policy for the implementation of "Proposition 1".

## 9) Master Plan for Aging (MPA) and Related Stakeholder Advisory Committees Reports

### a) Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Advisory Committee

Commissioner Jauregui reported that the committee met on January 17, 2025. The California Department of Aging (CDA) shared updates and the ADRC Consumer Experience Survey results were shared. The most requested services were housing, durable medical equipment, home repairs, food services, transportation, and referrals.



Karol Swartzlander, Executive Director  
Gavin Newsom, Governor

- b) Behavioral Health Task Force  
Commissioner Adelman reported that the Behavioral Health Task Force Meeting on November 13, 2024, included a discussion on Prop 1\* by representatives from the CA Department of Public Health, a presentation by Sarah Steenhausen, Deputy Director of Policy, Research and Equity, CDA, on recent findings on Older Adult Behavioral Health, and an update on Prop 1 implementation from Michelle Baas, Director, CA Department of Health Care Services.
- c) California Aging and Disability Research Partnership (CADRP)  
Chair Lindeman reported that the CADRP has identified priorities for the upcoming year. Key objectives include identifying knowledge gaps in state data on older adults, aligning research efforts with state investments, and fostering collaboration with other committees. Enhancing the CDA data dashboard emerged as a central initiative. Opportunities for partnerships, such as engaging state government and leveraging the newly formed Lived Experience Committee as a sounding board, will serve to ensure equity and stakeholder alignment. Communication and outreach of CADRP findings will be emphasized, including exploring how to best inform legislative initiatives and enhancing stakeholder connections statewide.
- d) Elder and Disability Justice Coordinating Council  
No report.

#### 10) Staff Report

Karol Swartzlander thanks the Commissioners for providing written Committee reports on short notice. She thanked the Commissioners for doing presentations locally and asked them to let staff know when they speak.

- a) CCoA General Meeting: March 11, 2025, 12 to 5 pm, Sacramento, hybrid  
Legislative Visits: March 12, 2025, 9 am to 4 pm, Sacramento, in person
- b) *NEW*: CCoA General Meeting: Thursday, May 22, 2025
  - i) Time and Location TBD, changed to a hybrid meeting
- c) CCoA General Meeting to be convened in concert with C4A Conference, Nov 5-7, Southern California, hybrid

#### 11) CCoA Legislative Update

- a) CCoA Sponsored Bills  
Coleman announced the current priority is finding an author for a renewal or extension of the Bagley Keene Open Meeting Act currently scheduled to sunset on January 1, 2026.
- b) New CCoA Bill Concept(s) and Budget Requests
  1. Budget Requests have narrowed to: Home Safe, Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP), and Community Care Expansion (CCE).
  2. Policy bill: Disproportionate impacts of Catastrophic Events on older Adults and Individuals with Disabilities.
  3. Commissioner Adelman is working with Senator Laird on a LGBTQ+ policy bill based on the recent report.
- c) **Public Comment**  
None



Karol Swartzlander, Executive Director  
Gavin Newsom, Governor

d) **Vote**

M/S/C (Tate/Schmeding)

**TO APPROVE CCOA SPONSORSHIP AND OR COLLABORATION FOR THREE BUDGET REQUESTS: HOME SAFE, HDAP, AND CCE.  
APPROVED.**

e) **Vote**

M/S/C (Frank/Jensen)

**TO DIRECT STAFF TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AND CONVENE HEARINGS, AS APPROPRIATE, TO IDENTIFY SOLUTIONS TO BETTER SERVE OLDER ADULTS AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES DURING CATASTROPHIC EVENTS AS WELL AS RESEARCH EFFORTS REGARDING LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES.  
APPROVED.**

12) **Commissioner Comments**

It was requested that all Commissioners be informed when any Commissioner makes a local presentation. Commissioners should inform staff so that presentations can be recorded.

It was suggested that CCoA conduct virtual town halls to hear from the public so that we all can benefit from their insights and success stories (including older adults, people with disabilities, and family caregivers). Colleagues in the aging network could help sponsor listening sessions.

13) **Public Comment**

14) **Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm.