

# California Commission on Aging

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GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor

**Executive Director**  
Karol Swartzlander

August 27, 2021

Congresswoman Anna Eshoo  
Chairwoman, House Energy and Commerce Committee's Health Subcommittee  
272 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Eshoo,

The California Commission on Aging (CCoA), the state's statutorily designated principal advocate on behalf of California's older adults, respectfully requests your support for critical investments in Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) as proposed in the Better Care Better Jobs Act (BCBJA).

The importance of the HCBS funding provisions of the BCBJA cannot be overstated. Creating new and sustainable options for long-term services and supports will be essential as the nation's older adult and disabled populations continue to grow.

In California, the new Medicaid HCBS funding would serve more than 574,000 older adults and persons with disabilities, providing many with an unprecedented choice of where and how they receive long-term services and supports. Not only it is well-established that older Americans prefer to receive care at home, but also receiving care at home can have better outcomes, providing more culturally competent and person-centered care than institutional settings provide.

Just as important are the impacts this funding would have on caregivers. The BCBJA would create 93,000 new direct care jobs in California at a time when demographic shifts and economic inequities are demanding a better paid, better prepared, and more diverse direct care workforce. The funding would allow all states to build on American Rescue Plan funded efforts to strengthen and retain direct care workers. In California, this shift would allow nearly 200,000 informal and family caregivers to return to work by expanding eligibility for Medicaid HCBS.

Please help California build and sustain an HCBS system to ensure that every individual with a disability or older adult has the opportunity to live with dignity and receive care in the setting they choose.

Sincerely,

Ellen Schmeding,  
Chair