

# California Commission on Aging

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GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor

**Executive Director**  
Karol Swartzlander

May 18, 2020

The Honorable Joaquin Arambula, MD  
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Health and Human Services  
State Capitol, Room 5155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## **RE: May Revision Proposals that Impact Vulnerable, Older Adults - OPPOSE**

Dear Chairman Arambula:

The California Commission on Aging (CCoA), established in the Welfare and Institutions Code as the principal advocate before the Governor, the Legislature and state agencies on behalf of California's older adults, **strongly opposes** all of the May Revision proposals to reduce and eliminate state programs that protect low income older adults, individuals with disabilities and their caregivers.

CCoA urges the Assembly Budget Subcommittee to reject the proposed elimination of the Community-Based Adult Services (CBAS) and Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP). Both programs provide Medi-Cal eligible, frail older adults with services that enable them to live with dignity in their homes and communities as an alternative to nursing facility care. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has identified older adults and those with underlying medical conditions as having a higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19. *Given the alarming number of deaths in skilled nursing facilities in California, it is critical to maintain community-based, cost-effective programs to protect the 48,000 vulnerable individuals these programs serve. The inability of nursing facilities to manage COVID-19 for residents is a clear indication that the administration, through stakeholders and the CDPH, must better regulate these facilities.* To further protect residents, the proposed reduction to the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program must also be rejected.

CCoA also opposes the reduction of funding to other essential community-based programs that provide older adults, persons with disabilities and their care givers with information about available services and facilitate access to services to support community living:

- Senior Nutrition
- Aging and Disability Resource Centers
- In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)
- Caregiver Resource Centers

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the first population Governor Newsom urged to remain home were older adults and individuals with underlying chronic medical conditions. He recently indicated this population will have to remain home for the foreseeable future. Eliminating and reducing funding for the very programs that support older Californians remaining safely in their homes is simply unacceptable.

Sincerely,



Betsy Butler  
Chair

CC: The Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor of the State of California  
The Honorable Toni Atkins, California Senate President Pro Tempore  
The Honorable Anthony Rendon, Speaker of the Assembly  
The Honorable Phil Ting, Chair, Assembly Committee on Budget  
The Honorable Holly Mitchell, Chair, Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review  
The Honorable Richard Pan, MD, Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee on Health and Human Services  
Dr. Mark Ghaly, Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency  
Kim McCoy Wade, Director, California Department of Aging