



California Collaborative for Long Term Services and Supports

December 11, 2013

Hon Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95816

Dear Governor Brown:

Re: Budget Proposal, Aging and Disability Issues

The California Collaborative for Long Term Services and Supports is a coalition of 35 statewide organizations that represent or serve seniors and persons with disabilities and that meet weekly to discuss policy and budget issues.

In discussions last week among 25 of its 35 member agencies, the Collaborative came to consensus on a series of recommendations for the administration's consideration as the 2014-15 budget proposal is made final. These recommendations recognize the context of budget agreements made during the past several terrible budget years, which are now behind us. Because the reductions had no programmatic rationale (they were related only to the budget crisis), we hope you would agree that they are no longer necessary:

- Eliminating a seven percent cut to In Home Supportive Services (IHSS) scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2014.
- Restoring a 10 percent rate cut (made in June, 2011) for adult day health programs, now called Community Based Adult Services (CBAS).
- Shoring up services that have been reduced by federal sequestration, including senior nutrition programs, housing vouchers, and programs authorized through the Older Americans Act.
- Ending reductions in Medi-Cal optional benefits, including eyeglasses, incontinence supplies, psychiatry, and durable medical equipment, and restoring the dental benefit to its 2009 level.
- Restoring SSI/SSP to the purchasing power it had five years ago.

In addition, to ensure a firm foundation for the administration's 2014 priorities and beyond, these challenges can be addressed in the proposed Budget Act:

- Providing home and community based services to individuals on waiting lists for Medi-Cal waiver services; they qualify for nursing-home or higher levels of care but want to remain in their communities.
- Addressing the housing needs of persons wanting home and community based services instead of institutional care.
- Adjusting the caps on rates for home and community based services within the state's Medi-Cal waivers, so that these rates reflect the state rates for people with similar needs who are in nursing homes or other institutions.
- Meeting, within Budget Act appropriations, the new requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act as they apply to IHHS providers working overtime.

As we look to the immediate future – the rollout of the Coordinated Care Initiative and Cal MediConnect -- and to the not-so-distant future – the continued growth in the populations of low-income seniors and persons with disabilities who want to live at home or in their communities, it is clear that California needs a strong foundation of long term services and supports. The 2014-15 Budget can go a long way toward ensuring that the needed foundation is in place. Without it, the CCI and Cal MediConnect are at risk as is the quality of life of hundreds of thousands of older or disabled Californians.

Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations. The Collaborative is available to provide additional information or to meet with your representatives at any time if that is helpful.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

Jack Hailey
For the California Collaborative

cc: Diana Dooley, Secretary, Health and Human Services Agency
Michael Cohen, Director, Department of Finance
Lora Connolly, Director, Department of Aging
Toby Douglas, Director, Department of Health Care Services
Will Lightbourne, Director, Department of Social Services

The following organizations participated in drafting this letter:

- AARP California
- The Arc California
- Association of California Caregiver Resource Centers
- California Alliance of Retired Americans
- California Association for Adult Day Services
- California Association of Area Agencies on Aging
- California Association of Health Facilities
- California Association of Health Plans
- California Association of Public Authorities
- California Elder Justice Coalition
- California In-Home Supportive Services Consumer Alliance
- California Foundation for Independent Living Centers
- California Council of the Blind
- California Chronic Care Coalition
- Californians for Disability Rights
- Congress of California Seniors
- Disability Rights California
- Harris Family Center on Disability and Health Policy
- LeadingAge California
- LifeLong Medical Care
- MSSP Site Association
- National Senior Citizens Law Center
- SEIU United Long Term Care Workers
- United Domestic Workers AFSCME
- Western Center on Law and Poverty