



California Association of
Public Authorities for IHSS

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August 30, 2019

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 280 (Jackson) – Older adults and persons with disabilities: fall prevention.
SUPPORT**

Dear Governor Newsom;

The California Association of Public Authorities for IHSS is in support of SB 280, by Senator Jackson, which requires the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to investigate possible changes to building standards that promote aging in place and establishes the Dignity at Home and Fall Prevention Act under the Department of Aging (CDA) to facilitate “aging in place”.

More than 700,000 Americans are hospitalized every year because of a fall injury, most often due to a broken hip or head injury. Thirty-three percent of all falls in the aging community involve hazards at home. Factors like poor lighting, loose carpets and a lack of safety equipment (grab bars, stair rails, and high toilets) are particular risks. Eighty percent of these falls happen in the bathroom.

In 2013 direct medical costs for falls – what patients and insurance companies pay – totaled \$34 billion, with Medicare picking up roughly 78 percent of those costs. Because the U.S. population is aging, both the number of falls and the costs to treat fall injuries are likely to rise. For many of our seniors and others at risk of falling who are on reduced or fixed incomes, simple home improvements to make their homes safer – the average cost of which is \$700 – could mean the difference between being in their own homes and having to seek institutional care.

SB 280 seeks to address these issues, educate Californians about the risk of falling and how to better prevent falls from happening, and support those who may be at risk of falling with services and supports such as home assessments and modifications. This effort is timely and will only be more needed as our population continues to age.

We respectfully urge your signature to enact SB 280 into law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Keeslar".

Karen Keeslar, CAPA Executive Director

cc: Senator Jackson