



May 22, 2024

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

The Honorable Mike McGuire
Senate President Pro Tempore
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Robert Rivas
Assembly Speaker
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Scott Wiener
Chair, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review
Committee
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Response to May Revision of Proposed 2024-25 State Budget

Dear Governor Newsom, Pro Temp McGuire, Speaker Rivas, Senator Wiener,
and Assemblymember Gabriel:

The California Collaborative for Long-Term Services and Supports (CCLTSS) is comprised of nearly 60 statewide and regional aging and disability organizations that promote dignity, health, and independence in community living. Our members include advocates, providers, community-based service organizations, labor, and health insurers, and collectively we represent millions of older and disabled Californians, their caregivers, and those who provide health, human services, and housing.

On behalf of our membership, we are writing to express concern over the proposed cuts and delays reflected in the 2024-25 May Revision, which undermine the state's commitment to the Master Plan for Aging and erode ongoing efforts to address long-standing inequities in care systems for older adults and people with disabilities.

Older Californians Act Nutrition Services

Members of CCLTSS strongly oppose the extreme cut to vitally needed nutrition services for California's older adults. Without this funding, up to 60% fewer home delivered and congregate meals would be provided than during the pandemic, with an estimated 10 million meals potentially lost over 3 years. The May Revision proposes to withdraw \$111 million from the Older Californians Act, eroding the state's efforts to bridge the gap in meal demand among older adults. Given the paramount importance of nutrition in the health and well-being of older adults, we strongly oppose the Older Californians Act nutrition cuts and urge the legislature to take a similar stance.

In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)

California's IHSS program offers crucial support to low-income older adults and individuals with disabilities, enabling them to stay safely in their homes and communities and avoid more costly institutional care. The May Revision proposes to eliminate the IHSS benefit for undocumented Californians, reversing the state's commitment to health care access for all residents, regardless of immigration status. Revoking access to IHSS means that low-income undocumented Californians would have to forgo home care or seek long-term services through institutional care, a significantly more expensive option for the state. This cut also places a heavy economic burden on family caregivers, who are often low-income women of color, and who may have no choice but to leave the workforce in order to provide uncompensated care to their loved ones, thereby deepening existing economic disparities.

We are also disappointed that the Governor proposes to eliminate the IHSS Permanent Backup Provider program. IHSS recipients experiencing gaps in their care face increased risks of costly hospitalization and institutional placement. Eliminating the IHSS Permanent Backup Provider system will exacerbate an already critically under-resourced program. California must ensure IHSS recipients receive the necessary care to remain safely in their homes when regular

caregivers are unavailable due to illness or emergencies. We urge the Legislature to reject this proposal and prioritize programs, like the Backup Provider program, that promote health equity and support community living for all Californians.

Medi-Cal Share of Cost

We are disappointed that the May Revision delays the implementation of the Medi-Cal Share of Cost reform. While we understand that California is facing a challenging budget environment, the current Medi-Cal Share of Cost program forces older adults and people with disabilities to survive on \$600 a month to receive health benefits – an amount increasingly inadequate given the rising cost of living in the state. Medi-Cal Share of Cost reform is crucial for ensuring that these vulnerable populations can afford essential health care without facing severe financial hardship, therefore CCLTSS urges the Legislature and Governor to remain committed to implementing this reform as quickly as possible.

Housing and Homelessness

California is grappling with a concerning surge in housing instability and homelessness among older adults, with nearly half of unhoused individuals now aged 50 and older. The threat of homelessness is equally pressing for disabled Californians, including Californians with developmental disabilities. Cutting funding to programs addressing the housing needs of older adults and people with disabilities is particularly alarming given the critical role housing plays in the delivery of long-term services and supports (LTSS). The May Revision proposes drastic reductions to essential initiatives like Home Safe and the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program. Combined with significant reductions in programs such as the Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention (HHAP), the Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP), and the Behavioral Health Bridge Program (BHBH), communities will be left with scarce resources to assist older and disabled adults in securing and maintaining housing stability, ultimately impacting access to necessary care. We urge the Legislature to reject each of the above proposed cuts, and to acknowledge the critical importance of the \$500 million state tax credit funds allocated to expand Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) housing.

Elder Justice

The APS program serves as a critical safety net for older adults and is integral to the State's Master Plan on Aging. CCLTSS members are concerned about the

proposed cuts reflected in the May Revision, which slash funding for the expansion of the APS program and significantly diminish resources for additional training for APS workers. Without adequate training funds, the APS workforce will be ill-equipped to address the complex needs of older adults and persons with disabilities facing abuse and neglect, which would leave vulnerable individuals without the protection and support they desperately need. Rejecting this proposal is essential to maintaining the integrity of APS and ensuring that vulnerable older adults receive the necessary care and protection they deserve.

Workforce

It's disheartening to note the proposal in the May Revision to eliminate \$820 million in healthcare workforce development funding through Fiscal Year 2027-28. These cuts will have far-reaching impacts across various healthcare professions, including community health workers, nurses, social workers, and others. With California's aging population expanding and the availability of trained caregivers diminishing, there has never been a more critical juncture to prioritize investments in our healthcare workforce.

Behavioral Health

We find the May Revision's proposal to substantially decrease the California Department of Aging's funding for Older Adult Behavioral Health deeply concerning. There is a considerable demand for behavioral health services among older Californians, with research revealing that fewer than half of older adults with mental and/or substance use disorders receive essential treatment. Moreover, the detrimental effects of older adult isolation and loneliness underscore the necessity for proactive interventions, including robust behavioral health support. We strongly urge the legislature to explore avenues for maintaining investments in the behavioral health infrastructure to adequately support older adults.

Developmental Services Rate Implementation Delay

To our disappointment, the May Revision maintains the intent to delay the rate implementation for developmental services, posing a significant setback for individuals with developmental disabilities by hindering their access to crucial services and support. With resources already stretched thin and demand on the rise, postponing rate implementation only magnifies the hurdles confronting this vulnerable group. CCLTSS underscores the critical importance of timely and

sufficient funding to ensure that individuals with developmental disabilities receive the essential care and assistance necessary for a dignified and fulfilling life.

California's dedication to the development and implementation of the MPA in recent years underscores our commitment to rectifying long-standing inequities in care systems for older adults and people with disabilities. In this exceptionally challenging budget year, we deeply appreciate that the May Revision maintains crucial support by refraining from cuts to SSI/SSP grants, preserving investments in health care eligibility and benefits, and safeguarding critical home and community-based services, like Community-Based Adult Services and the Multipurpose Senior Services Program. CCLTSS is committed to ensuring continued progress, and we urge the Legislature to reject harmful cuts in the Governor's May Revision that would impact this vulnerable population and, ultimately, lead to higher state expenditures as a result of worsening health outcomes. We remain committed to collaborating with the Legislature and Administration throughout this challenging budget cycle to safeguard the well-being of older adults and people with disabilities.

Sincerely,



Mariya Kalina
Executive Director
CCLTSS

CC:

Senator Caroline Menjivar, Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #3
Assemblymember Dr. Akilah Weber, Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee # 1
Assemblymember Dr. Corey Jackson, Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2
Angela Pontes, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Richard Figueroa, Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Kim McCoy Wade, Senior Advisor on Aging, Disability, and Alzheimer's, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly, California Health and Human Services Agency

Secretary Tomiquia Moss, California Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency

Susan DeMarois, Director, California Department of Aging

Michelle Baass, Director, California Department of Health Care Services

Kim Johnson, Director, California Department of Social Services

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