



## Media Advisory

For immediate release: October 27, 2009

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### **State's Mishandling of Changes to In-Home Care Services Leaves Elderly and Disabled Fearful**

*Changes scheduled for November 1 but many questions remain unanswered*

**SACRAMENTO** – More than 450,000 elderly and disabled people who depend on in-home care services face an uncertain future in just four days due to the state's inability to provide complete and accurate instructions on its changes to the In-Home Supportive Services program.

County welfare advocates will testify at an Assembly Budget Committee hearing, **Wednesday, October 28, at 1 p.m.** about how the state's mishandling of program changes enacted in the 2009-10 budget has had a terrifying effect on those who receive in-home care services, leading them to believe services they are entitled to may wrongly end if their caregivers do not complete a confusing eligibility process that the state has yet to finalize. Despite the many unanswered questions, the state has directed counties to implement the eligibility process and changes by November 1.

Among the many unresolved implementation issues:

- Counties are unable to enroll and establish eligibility for caregivers due to the state's incomplete directions on processing criminal background checks and required orientation sessions.
- The state's computer system will prevent payments to new caregivers who have not completed all the necessary steps, leaving recipients to either pay for the services or ask their caregivers to work for free starting November 1.

"We are astounded that the state is complacent in allowing the elderly and disabled to have to pay for their caretakers' wages out of their limited income, or ask their caregiver to work for free," said Frank Mecca, executive director of the County Welfare Directors Association. "Many of these issues could have been avoided and the elderly and disabled would not face a disruption to the critical personal care assistance they depend on to safely remain in their homes if the state had not jammed through requirements that are incomplete, confusing and inconsistent with the law."

Advocates will ask for at least a 90-day extension to implement the changes, assuming the state is able to resolve the many issues and unanswered questions in that timeframe.

The hearing comes in the wake of an October 19 court-issued preliminary injunction that directed the California Department of Social Services to halt implementation of the IHSS service reduction provisions due to the state's unfair method for determining whose services would be affected by the 2009-10 budget cuts. The state has pushed the problem onto county staff to manually make the changes in the state's automated system, placing a significant workload burden on already-strapped county agencies. A growing number of counties have told the state they simply will be unable to meet the deadline.

**What:** Assembly Budget Committee hearing on IHSS Implementation Problems

**When:** Wednesday, October 28, 1 p.m.

**Where:** State Capitol, Room 4202

**Who:** Diane Kaljian, Sonoma County Director of Adult and Aging Services

Frank Mecca, Executive Director of the County Welfare Directors Association of California

The County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA) is a nonprofit association representing the human service directors from each of California's 58 counties. The Association's mission is to promote a human services system that encourages self-sufficiency of families and communities, and protects vulnerable children and adults from abuse and neglect.