



CWDA
Advancing Human Services
for the Welfare of All Californians



JUSTICE IN AGING

FIGHTING SENIOR POVERTY THROUGH LAW



CALIFORNIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF
PA|PG|PC

May 16, 2024



CAPA

To: The Honorable Caroline Menjivar
Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3

Honorable Members
Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3

The Honorable Corey Jackson
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2

Honorable Members
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2



RE: ELIMINATION OF CRITICAL SAFEGUARDS FOR OLDER AND DEPENDENT ADULTS: ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (APS) – OPPOSE

The undersigned organizations *strongly oppose* the budget cuts made to Adult Protective Services (APS) in the Governor’s 2024-25 May Revision proposal. The May Revision proposes a permanent \$40 million General Fund (GF) reduction to APS response to victims of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and a \$4.8 million GF permanent reduction for training of APS social workers, largely eliminating all training to APS social workers. These cuts would also result in the permanent loss of \$54.3 million in federal matching funds. Additionally, the May Revision proposes cutting \$65 million GF from the Home Safe housing program serving APS clients. Total cuts to the APS program would equal \$109.8 million GF.

Cuts of this magnitude in a single program and focused on the most vulnerable amongst our older adults population would reverse years of investments in older adults and persons with disabilities with the highest needs. This proposal will wind back the clock of progress in advancing elder justice and undermines efforts to advance California’s Master Plan for Aging. This proposed disinvestment threatens to unravel critical safety net services that keep older adult victims of abuse, neglect and financial exploitation safely housed, often serving as the last stop preventing homelessness, institutionalization in nursing homes, hospitalization and death.



APS currently serves individuals over 60 and dependent adults ages 18-59 who are victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Law enforcement, doctors, other mandated reporters and the community rely on APS services to protect older and dependent adults from further abuse. APS is an effective program, responding to 197,148 reports of abuse in 2022-23. Cuts to APS funding will result in the loss of critical and lifesaving responses and services. The May Revision will have the following impacts:

APS Expansion Funds: Approved in the 2021 Budget Act, funding (\$70 million GF, \$79.2 million total funds) for the APS expansion increased services to adults between the ages of 60-64 and allowed for longer-term case management for adults with more complex needs to enable them to remain safely in their own homes and communities. Since the implementation of the APS expansion, APS clients aged 60-64 have almost doubled from about 920 cases per month to an average of roughly 1,700 cases per month. Reduction of this funding would result in the immediate elimination of social work staff that provide critical resources to keep older and dependent adults safe in their communities.

APS Training Funds: The Governor's May Revision also proposes a complete elimination of funding (\$4.8 million GF, \$9.2 million total funds) for training APS social workers. The cut will also eliminate statewide training for Public Administrators, Public Guardians and Public Conservators (PA/PG/PC), which rely upon this funding to help meet their state-mandated training requirements, made even more important by the recent passage of SB 43 (Statutes of 2023). Funding for APS training was originally included in the 2001 Budget Act to provide uniformity and consistency in the administration and delivery of APS across California's 58 county APS programs and to support PA/PG/PC training mandates. Training is essential to support social work staff in meeting the needs of vulnerable older and dependent adults impacted by abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Training is also needed to prepare for the implementation of the first-ever federal regulations for APS. States must comply with these regulations by May 2028.

APS Home Safe Program: The Home Safe Program was established in 2018-19 as a three-year, \$15 million opt-in pilot program and expanded through the Budget Act of 2021 which provided an additional \$185 million on a one-time basis to expand the program to all 58 counties. This funding was set to expire June 30, 2024, was extended last year to June 30, 2025, and in the Governor's January proposed budget, was proposed to have \$65 million in funds deferred for expenditure to FY 2025-26. Home Safe offers tangible housing assistance for victims of abuse, neglect and financial exploitation, acting as a critical buffer to preventing homelessness and helping older adults maintain stable and safe housing. According to CDSS, 4,098 individuals were approved for Home Safe services in FY 2022-23 and 46 percent of participants exited into permanent housing.

The older adult population in California is rapidly growing. By 2030, one in five Californians will be 65 or older. According to California's Master Plan for Aging, one of the greatest threats to full inclusion for all ages is elder abuse. Reductions and eliminations to APS funding would

undermine an essential piece of the MPA and the state's commitment to older adults. Reducing APS funding would result in immediate reductions of critical social work staff, loss of important training that builds statewide consistency in service delivery across California's 58 county APS programs and threatens to increase the number of homeless older adults on our city streets.

While we appreciate that difficult decisions must be made in light of the significant structural budget deficit, we must not address the budget shortfall at the expense of California's most vulnerable adults.

We strongly urge the Legislature to maintain the state's commitment to dependent and older adults by rejecting the reduction to APS expansion dollars and the elimination of training for APS social work staff.

Sincerely,

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County Welfare Directors Association

Vivianne Mbaku, Director, Equity in Justice
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Donata Bohanec, MPA, Executive Director
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