



CWDA
Advancing Human Services
for the Welfare of All Californians

CCoA
California Commission on Aging
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ELDER JUSTICE
COALITION
PROTECT • DEFEND • EMPOWER



April 4, 2018

To: The Honorable Dr. Joaquin Arambula
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1

Honorable Members
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1



RE: ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES – HOME SAFE

Our broad coalition of organizations urges your support to provide \$15 million General Fund in 2018-19 to establish Home Safe, a homelessness prevention demonstration grant program for victims of elder and dependent adult abuse and neglect. This proposed one-time augmentation would allow participating county Adult Protective Services (APS) programs to demonstrate over three years how providing short-term housing crisis intervention can help reduce the incidence and risk of homelessness among California's older and dependent adults.



Victims of elder and dependent adult abuse and neglect are at unique risk of becoming homeless. New research shows that nearly half of the homeless older adults typically led "conventional" lives until a crisis led them directly to homelessness – a crisis such as being financially exploited by a scam artist or family member, or being left unable to care for themselves after the death of a spouse or caregiver. When APS receives a report of such crises, social workers investigate those claims and create a plan to help the individual stabilize and recover. But, county social workers are finding that they are unable to provide the assistance necessary to help victims of abuse maintain their homes as they recover. With \$126 million in funding, APS investigates 150,000 referrals and provides short-term services to 25,000 clients each year. In contrast, the child welfare system serves a population 4 times larger than APS, but receives 40 times the funding – \$5 billion a year. Unlike child welfare, APS simply does not have the resources to provide a more in-depth intervention, especially during a housing crisis.



A one-time \$15 million General Fund investment to establish Home Safe would allow participating county APS programs to demonstrate over three years how intervening at the moment of crisis can prevent homelessness among victims of abuse and neglect. Home Safe counties would identify clients at risk of losing their homes and provide services including short-term rental and utility assistance, hoarding interventions, immediate mental health treatment, and



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intensive case management to ensure clients are able to maintain their homes. Since APS already works with individuals in moments of crisis, the program is in a unique position to target assistance to those most likely to become homeless at the moment they need it most. Research demonstrates that targeting homelessness prevention resources for those who need it most will not only save taxpayer dollars in the long run, but ultimately save lives.

For these reasons, we urge your support for a one-time augmentation of \$15 million General Fund to help victims of elder abuse and neglect remain safely in their own homes.

Sincerely,

Frank J. Mecca, Executive Director
County Welfare Directors Association

Edward F. Walsh, Chairman
California Commission on Aging

Lisa Nerenberg, Executive Director
California Elder Justice Coalition

Justin Garrett, Legislative Representative
California State Association of Counties

Derrell Kelch, Executive Director
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