

The Honorable Shirley Weber
Chair, Assembly Budget Sub-Committee #1
California State Capitol
Sacramento, California 95814

March 24, 2014

Re: Older Californians Act services, Department of Aging

Dear Assemblymember Weber,

The Senior Services Coalition represents over 41 organizations that provide health and supportive services to over 50,000 seniors in Alameda County. We are writing to express our deep concern regarding the status of supportive and preventive services for older Californians.

Over the past ten years, California has dismantled our safety net for seniors. While the population of seniors grew exponentially, state funding dropped by half for California Department on Aging programs. State funding vanished for many programs, including cornerstones of the Older Californians Act that were designed to help seniors successfully navigate the challenges of aging so that they can maintain a steady state. The services cut or eliminated include the Brown Bag Program, Alzheimer's Day Care Resource Centers, Brown Bag, Caregiver Resource Centers, Foster Grandparents Program, Linkages, Ombudsman, Respite purchase of services, Senior Companions Program, Senior Employment Program... the list of cuts and eliminations is stunningly long. In many communities, programs have closed their doors. Some programs are just barely holding on – at least in some counties – with local and federal funding. But nowhere is there capacity to serve the need.

Returning the Older Californian's Act budget to its 2006 levels would take less than \$30 million, a small sum compared to the significant leverage and quality outcomes that these services have demonstrated.

We urge the Committee to recommend restoring the funding for Older Californians Act services in the 2014/15 budget.

Sincerely,



Wendy Peterson
Director, Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County