I’m Wendy Peterson, Director of the Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County, a coalition of over 40 community-based organizations that provide health and social services to seniors.

Many of our Coalition members are in the audience today, and I’d like to ask them to stand. Rather than each of them speaking, they asked me to speak today on their behalf.

First, we would like to express our collective thanks to Supervisor Miley for advancing the recommendation to identify county funding to stabilize senior service providers in the near term, and to address the longer term need to develop a sustainable plan for aging services.

We offer our sincere thanks to Supervisor Valle and your colleagues on the Board of Supervisors for hearing us, for recognizing the compelling need, and for taking action to adopt the recommendation.

We also wish to thank Social Services Agency Director Lori Cox for embracing this mandate in a thoughtful and cooperative way, and for mapping the practical steps that will take us from where we are today to where we need to be to ensure that Alameda County does right by its seniors.

The stabilization funding will make a meaningful difference, and we are deeply grateful. It will enable CBOs to shore up their infrastructures so they can continue to provide essential services.

We look forward to the development of the new Planner position at Adult and Aging Services and the potential that that new capacity represents: a nexus for innovation and new funding, and an anchor for county-wide planning.

I think we are relieved that the county is embarking on this comprehensive planning effort. It will be a significant undertaking, but it is a golden opportunity. By identifying current and future needs, innovating, and engaging new financing strategies, we can strengthen aging services and address the challenge of our aging population.

Senior Services Coalition members are wholeheartedly committed to working together with both agencies as we embark on what we anticipate will be a participatory planning process that engages the expertise of the aging services community.

I don’t have the time in my 3 minutes to elaborate on the resources that are in our own backyard, so I’ve asked my colleague from Fremont to touch on the Tri-City area’s experience with integrating funds and program areas across departments in order to better serve seniors.

With that: Thank you for hearing us and doing right by seniors.