

# Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County

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May 25, 2017

To: The Honorable Holly J. Mitchell  
Chair, Budget Conference Committee  
State Capitol, Room 5080  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Phil Ting  
Vice Chair, Budget Conference Committee  
State Capitol, Room 6026  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (APS) HOME SAFE: SUPPORT ASSEMBLY VERSION**

The Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County, representing 40 nonprofit and public community-based organizations, urges your support of the Assembly action to establish Home Safe, a homelessness prevention grant program for victims of elder and dependent adult abuse and neglect. The Assembly's budget augmentation of \$10 million General Fund ongoing would allow participating counties to provide short-term housing crisis intervention in order to reduce the incidence and risk of homelessness among California's older adults.

Each year, California receives about 150,000 unduplicated reports of elder abuse, and the number is rising as our population ages. Many victims are at risk of losing their housing as a direct result of suffering abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Many victims require intervention services to stabilize their housing so they may benefit from APS services, including linkage to counseling and in-home support. But, few resources exist today to prevent homelessness or rehouse victims who have lost their homes.

The consequences of homelessness among older adults are dire and costly. Research shows homeless adults are at higher risk of chronic health problems—such as diabetes, lung disease, and cognitive impairment—and are likely to die *decades earlier* than those who are housed. For many victims, the health hardships of homelessness exacerbate the physical and emotional wounds of abuse and neglect, leading to increased emergency room visits and accelerated entry into nursing home care, both at high cost to the state and to taxpayers.

With limited affordable housing options for seniors and persons with disabilities, a prevention focus and early intervention are necessary to serve this population. Home Safe would allow participating counties to provide housing crisis intervention to victims of abuse, thus reducing the risk of long-term homelessness and improving outcomes for California's older adults. Home Safe would build on existing best practices to prevent eviction, stabilize housing, and rapidly re-house those at risk of or recently homeless by leveraging and providing linkages to services including short-term rental and utility assistance, heavy cleaning, immediate mental health treatment, and intensive case management to ensure clients can maintain their homes.

There is no medicine as powerful as housing. Home Safe is a critical step toward ending elder homelessness, and we support this request to establish Home Safe as part of the APS program.

Sincerely,

  
Wendy Peterson, Director

cc: Honorable Members, Budget Conference Committee  
Jennifer Troia and Craig Cornett, Office of the Senate President Pro Tempore  
Theresa Pena, Consultant, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3  
Anthony Archie, Consultant, Senate Republican Fiscal Office  
Callie Freitag, County Welfare Directors Association