

# Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County

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March 26, 2018

The Honorable Jim Wood  
Chair, Assembly Health Committee  
State Capitol, Room 6005  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## **Re: Support for AB 2430 (Arambula)**

Dear Assemblymember Wood,

The Senior Services Coalition represents 40 organizations that together provide health and supportive services to over 65,000 seniors in Alameda County. We are writing in support of AB 2430 (Arambula), which would right a terrible unfairness that many older people in our county struggle with every day.

AB 2430 would raise the income level of the Aged and Disabled Medi-Cal program (A&D program) to 138% FPL, creating a “bright line” of income eligibility. This simple change would create parity between senior and disabled Medi-Cal beneficiaries, and other adult Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

Implemented in 2001, the A&D program provides free, full-scope Medi-Cal to low-income seniors and persons with disabilities. When the program was created, income eligibility was set at 100% FPL, plus income disregards of \$230 and \$310 for individuals and couples, respectively. In 2001, that set eligibility at 133% FPL. But because the income disregards have remained static, the income eligibility limits have lost value every year and are currently 123% FPL, or \$1,242 a month for an individual.

When a beneficiary’s income increases above 123% FPL, she is moved into the Medically Needy program with a share of cost. This share of cost means that a beneficiary must spend all of her monthly income, less \$600, on healthcare before Medi-Cal will cover any services. Take for example a senior with a monthly income of \$1,300. Before Medi-Cal will pay for services, this senior would need to pay \$700 out of pocket on health care costs, leaving her only \$600 per month for all her other living expenses.

This low eligibility threshold, coupled with the high share of cost means that, unlike all the adult beneficiaries covered under the Affordable Care Act who qualify for free Medi-Cal up to 138% FPL, many seniors and people with disabilities must pay more than half their income before they can access Medi-Cal coverage. For these reasons, the Senior Services Coalition supports AB 2430 and we respectfully ask for your support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Wendy Peterson  
Director