



April 1, 2019

The Honorable Jim Wood
California State Capitol Room 6005
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0002

RE: AB 1042 (WOOD) Medi-Cal: beneficiary maintenance needs: home upkeep allowances: transitional needs funds – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Wood,

I am writing on behalf of the California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA) to support AB 1042, a bill that will help low-income persons living in a nursing home or other medical facility return home. Many seniors and people with disabilities live in facilities when they would rather live in their community. Medi-Cal pays for institutional living but does not make it easy to return home.

CARA is California's largest grassroots senior advocacy organization, representing over 1,000,000 seniors and their families through our 270+ affiliated organizations. Allowing seniors and people with disabilities to live and age in their communities is a priority of our organization.

For people living in a facility, there is a "Home Upkeep Allowance (HUA)", intended to help maintain the home until return. This benefit is not well known or used, possibly because at \$209 per month it will not really help save a home in today's market. AB 1042 proposes to increase the HUA to an amount based on the actual minimum cost of maintaining the resident's home, including, but not limited to, mortgage or rent, property taxes, and insurance with a cap at 100% of the federal poverty level. These funds would not be counted against a person's assets or income for purposes of Medi-Cal eligibility. For people who do not already have a home, the bill would establish a transitional needs fund to assist in the costs of securing a home. Leaving a nursing home is difficult even though it is the choice most people want. For people who still need care, many services can be provided at home for far less money than the state pays to a nursing home. At the same time, AB 1042 helps enforce a person's civil right to live in their community.

For these reasons, CARA supports AB 1042 and looks forward to working with you on its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Hene Kelly".

Hene Kelly
Legislative Director
415-533-5244