



CARA Alert – May 14, 2019

A publication of the California Alliance for Retired Americans.

DISABILITY & AGING CAPITOL ACTION DAY

Thursday, May 23, 2019 /10:00am – 3:00pm

**Cesar Chavez Park, 910 I St, Sacramento
SOUTH Steps of Capitol, Sacramento/ N St**

**There are still seats on the bus - RSVP by Friday, May 17th to reserve/
call 510-663-4086**

MAY 20 - POLICY TRAINING TELECONFERENCE 2:00PM-3:30PM

***FOR EVERYONE!!!! EVEN IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND
SACRAMENTO ON MAY 23RD IN PERSON, YOU CAN
PARTICIPATE IN THE DAY VIA PHONE***

Whether you plan to attend our May 23rd Disability and Aging Capitol action day in person, or you plan to call your legislators on that day to show your support, we invite you to join our teleconference and webinar to learn about the policy platform we will be promoting – as well as other key logistics for the day.

Please click the link below to join the webinar on May 20:

<https://zoom.us/j/384972947>

Or Call - you can use either number:

1(669) 900 6833 -- Access Code/Meeting ID: 384972947#

or 1(408) 638 0968 -- Access Code/Meeting ID: 384972947#

Call Your State Legislator on May 23rd

If you are unable to attend the Lobby Day in person, please call your State Assemblymember and Senator on May 23rd. Tell them you are part of CARA and the Disability Action Network, and you support these issues: **SB 512 (Pan)** - Funding for long term supports and services and **AB 1434 (Kalra)** - Increasing SSI/SSP base grant and reinstating COLA – and urge them to VOTE YES on these bills.

A free toll free STATE CAPITOL Switchboard number will be available starting on May 20th. When you call this number, it will ask you for your name and address (with zip code) and then connect you directly to your State Assemblymember. After speaking with them (or leaving a message), you then call the number again using the SAME PHONE, and it will connect you to your State Senator. You leave the same message with them. You will also be able to connect via a special website, if you would rather send an email

We will send it out the special phone number and website on May 20th after the Teleconference Training via a CARA Alert, including talking points. Everyone can participate in Disability and Aging Capitol Action Day on May 23rd, either via phone, email or in Person. Don't miss this historic and powerful event.

Talking Points for CARA/DAC May 23rd Priority Bills

SB 512 (Pan) – Long Term Supports and Services

SB 512 lays the groundwork to establish subsidies to help middle income seniors and people with disabilities, who do not qualify for MediCAL or IHSS, buy long term support services, including home care. It establishes a Trust Fund, a Benefits Board, and an Advisory Committee for this program. A companion effort makes a \$1 million dollar budget request for a study of the benefits and costs for such a program.

California currently has almost 8 million older adults or persons with disabilities – by 2030 more than one million older adults in California will require some assistance with self care. Our state has many challenges to face in developing and financing a comprehensive program of long term supports and services.

LTSS are not covered adequately by Medicare, and most Californians cannot afford to purchase long term care insurance. Paying out of pocket for LTSS is very expensive and creates a significant financial and social burden for families – and is simply impossible for most Californians. For individuals and families, the unanticipated costs can lead to impoverishment, lack of care options, intense psychological stress, and unnecessary institutionalization (which comes at a high price for individuals and for the state).

California must begin to plan for our growing aging and disabled population, and develop a comprehensive plan to provide LTSS and a financing mechanism for these services. SB 512 starts the process of developing this plan.

AB 1434 (Kalra) – Increase SSI/SSP Base Grant and Reinstate COLA

AB 1434 increases individual SSI/SSP grants from \$889 per month (90% Federal Poverty Level, FPL), to \$1,099 per month (112% FPL). Supplementary Security Income, SSI, is a Federally- funded income support program; SSP is a state supplement, but in California it has been reduced to the lowest legal amount. From 2008 to 2012, \$4.6 billion was taken from Calif. SSP, reducing SSP payments by \$77 per month for 1.3 million SSI/SSP recipients. Some of the State SSP cuts have been offset by Federal SSI increases, but today's total monthly payments are still \$30 less than five years ago, and eliminating cost-of-living raises is an additional \$161/month effective loss.

When accounting for actual living costs, California has the highest poverty rates in the US, 23% overall and 25% for seniors. 56% of California seniors and people with disabilities live below the poverty level, with less than twice what's needed for bare existence, counting actual costs, and available government assistance. For example, a studio apartment rent is over half the SSI/SSP payment in all California counties, and over the full payment in 13 counties.

The recession ended several years ago. However, recession-era cuts to SSI/SSP remain in place and would continue under the Governor's proposed 2018-2019 budget. California must do its share to raise SSI/SSP for its million most vulnerable.

Get Social With CARA. Did you know that CARA is on Facebook? Learn about our local activities and meetings, town halls and about other news affecting retirees. [Be sure to like our CARA Facebook page here.](#) Make sure your friends and family like this page too. Help retirees build power by liking CARA's Facebook page. Every like and share helps spread our message.

You can contact CARA at:

CARA, 600 Grand Ave. #410, Oakland, CA 94610

NORTH: 510-663-4086 • 510-663-4099 (fax) • jreid.cara@gmail.com

CENTRAL VALLEY: 714-488-5488 • Vishnu.cara@gmail.com

SOUTH:

LA COUNTY: 917-434-3220 • jennichang.cara@gmail.com

ORANGE/SAN DIEGO: 714-460-3542 • smeyer.cara@gmail.com

OTHER SOUTHERN CA COUNTIES: 714-488-5488 • Vishnu.cara@gmail.com

TOLLFREE 1-877-223-6107 • www.californiaalliance.org