



May 21st CARA Lobby Day –Talking Points on Bills

Who We Are

The **California Alliance for Retired Americans** (CARA) is California's largest, grassroots senior advocacy organization, representing 1 million seniors through our 275+ affiliated organizations. We work on issues to improve the quality of life for seniors and their families in California. CARA has members in EVERY part of California, and we educate and engage them through our local CARA Action Teams (CATs), which meet on a regular basis to develop local strategies on our key issues. CARA also has a very active Legislative Committee that takes positions on important issues, and attends hearings and legislative meetings in the State Capitol.

May 21st – Statewide Senior Lobby Day

Today, CARA members are holding meetings with almost EVERY State Assembly member and Senator – virtually, by teleconference or zoom, as part of our **Statewide Senior Lobby Day** event. We want our elected officials to know that CARA really does have constituents in every legislative district who are concerned about the direction our state is going as it relates to the needs of seniors and people with disabilities – which are also the fastest growing demographic in our state.

Three CARA Priority Bills for May 21st Lobby Day

CARA takes positions on many bills throughout the legislative session. From those, we identify key priorities that match with the issues our members vote on at our annual convention. Today we would like to urge your support and assistance on these 3 Issues:

- AB 695 (Arambula) – Expand the HomeSAFE program/reduce homelessness
- SB 260 (Wiener) – Climate Corporate Accountability Act
- SB 650 (Stern) – Nursing home financial transparency

AB 695 – HomeSAFE program

The Home Safe Program, created by Assembly Bill (AB) 1811 is intended to support the safety and housing stability of individuals involved in Adult Protective Services (APS) by providing housing-related assistance using evidence-based practices for homeless assistance and prevention.

Counties operating Home Safe programs utilize a range of strategies to support housing stability for APS clients, including short-term financial assistance, legal services, eviction prevention, heavy cleaning, and landlord mediation, among other services. AB 695 would continue the HomeSAFE program and add much needed resources to help keep older adults housed with the services they need.

Story here if applicable

ASK: Will you support AB 695 when it comes before you?

SB 260 – Climate Corporation Accountability Act

The Climate Corporation Accountability Act which will require major corporations who do business in California and make over \$1 billion annually to publicly disclose their full carbon footprint in a way that is understandable and accessible to the public.

The bill will require those major corporations to set science-based emission reduction targets in order to avoid global temperature increases over 1.5 degrees Celsius, which is what the world's leading climate scientists say is necessary in order to avoid catastrophic climate change. California's climate plan must include holding corporate polluters accountable who are responsible for the majority of the world's pollution and must be based on science. California is already suffering from Global warming and climate change with increased heat events, wildfires, sea level rise, and more. The time to act is NOW. We are doing our part to reduce our carbon footprint. Now its' time for the biggest, wealthiest corporations to do the same.

Story here if applicable

ASK: Will you support SB 260 when it comes before you?

SB 650- Nursing Home Transparency

California is paying more than ever before for nursing home care and it is not getting its money's worth. Despite receiving six billion dollars a year through Medi-Cal, the care provided in facilities is often abysmal and public dissatisfaction has never been more acute. The COVID-19 pandemic has tragically underscored the dangerous conditions at nursing homes throughout California. Over 110,000 residents and staff have been infected with COVID-19 and nearly 10,000 of them have died from it.

The disconnect between the funds facilities receive and the care they provide has everything to do with the way owners structure their businesses to maximize profit at the expense of care, all without the public's knowledge. Nursing homes increasingly set up "related party" businesses to siphon reimbursements that should have gone to care—while permitting owners to claim they are losing money and seek more and more

taxpayer reimbursement. As we shovel more money to nursing homes, quality continues to decline. California has invested in nursing homes but nursing homes have not invested in improved care.

SB 650 promises to shed light on how nursing homes spend taxpayer dollars, so the public will finally know how much of its taxpayer dollars are being used to support nursing home residents versus how much is funding the lifestyles of billionaire owners. SB 650 is an essential piece of the legislature's 2021 PROTECT Plan, a package of bills aimed at reforming nursing homes to improve state oversight, financial transparency, accountability, and ultimately enhance care for all residents.

Story here if applicable

ASK: Will you support SB 650 when it comes before you?

2 YEAR BILLS THAT WE WOULD LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT (if time permits)

Given our experience with COVID 19 and the spotlight it has shown on our broken health care system, we believe that it is time for California to adopt a **GUARANTEED HEALTH CARE PLAN** that covers everyone, from cradle to grave, with comprehensive benefits and without premiums, co-pays, deductibles, and out of pocket costs. By eliminating the insurance middlemen, we can save up to 30% of every health care dollar that is wasted on administration, marketing, profits, and our inability to contain costs. The comprehensive benefit would include all services now covered and add vision, dental, hearing, mental health and most importantly, **a comprehensive long term supports and services plan so that our rapidly growing aging population can get the care they need at home, rather than winding up in a more expensive, taxpayer reliant nursing home.**

AB 1400 – Kalra would create the CalCARE program that would transform our health care system In addition to this two year bill, there are many efforts occurring through the Governor's office, Dept. of Aging, the Dept. of Insurance and beyond to help make health care a right for all. We hope you will support these efforts and work with CARA to make health care for all a reality in California.

Wrap Up of Meeting – by Coordinator

- Make sure the legislator/staff has responded to each of the three Asks.
- If more information is requested, please assure them that we will follow up (put this in the report form that you send back to CARA).
- Ask if there are any final comments by CARA members or the legislator/staff.
- Thank them for their time today and end the call.

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN CARA'S VIRTUAL LOBBY DAY.