March 30th, 2023

The Honorable Tina McKinnor
Chair, Assembly Public Employment & Retirement
1020 N Street, Room 153
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1672 (Haney) IHSS Employer-Employee Relations Act – Support

Dear Chair McKinnor,

The California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA), one of the state’s foremost grassroots senior and disability advocacy organizations, representing over 1 million Californians, is proud to support AB 1672 (Haney), which shifts collective bargaining for IHSS providers from the county-level to the state-level. This long overdue transition to statewide collective bargaining will substantially improve equity for IHSS providers and for the first time in program history, by ensuring caregivers are provided real opportunities to negotiate for livable wages, access to benefits, etc.

The IHSS program is designed to allow low-income older adults and individuals living with a disability to receive assistance with their care and activities of daily living while remaining in the comfort of their home. The IHSS program currently employs just over 600,000 IHSS providers and serves over 690,000 recipients. However, the demand for long-term care is expected to grow drastically over the next decade as the population of older adults increases.

CARA has a unique composition of caregivers (IHSS providers) and care-receivers (IHSS consumers) among our vibrant and diverse constituency. While we are firmly committed to advancing policies that support the care economy, our perspectives on the state of long term care in California are shaped by the wealth of experiences of our members. Elevating collective bargaining for IHSS providers to the state-level is universally and unequivocally supported by both caregivers and care-receivers among CARA’s membership. Investing in IHSS providers not only help prepare California for the massive demographic shift in 2030, where older adults and seniors will comprise 25% of the state’s population, but will also drive economic growth locally as caregivers typically spend their money in the communities where they live and serve their clients.

Furthermore, IHSS is quintessential to California’s spectrum of LTSS programs and services. As the income barriers for IHSS eligibility are slowly sunsetted (like the minimum asset limit, for example), more Californians will become eligible and ultimately enroll in IHSS, which is why it is vital that the Legislature take the
necessary steps to support this underpaid and undervalued workforce by elevating collective bargaining to state-level.

Affording seniors, and all Californians, viable resources to age with grace, dignity and independence - such as investing in the dignity of our care workforce - not only represent CARA’s foundational principles but we believe will ensure a healthier, more accessible and inclusive California for our aging community.

For these reasons, CARA strongly supports AB 1672, and we respectfully ask for your AYE vote.

Sincerely,

Hene Kelly
Chair, Legislative Committee
California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA)

Keith Umemoto
Co-Chair, Legislative Committee
California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA)