



AREA AGENCY ON AGING
San Benito & Santa Cruz Counties

FOSTER GRANDPARENT/SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM
Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara & Santa Cruz Counties

PROJECT SCOUT
Tax Counseling Assistance

AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CONNECTION
Navigating the San Benito County Senior & Disability Services Network

AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Wednesday June 18, 2025

10 a.m. – 12 Noon

Hybrid in-person - Zoom Meeting
175 Westridge Dr., Watsonville, CA

Guests can also join via Zoom - *In person seating is limited*
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86490817703>

Meeting ID: 864 9081 7703
One tap mobile
+16699006833,,86490817703# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location
+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/k6W3Ygvu>

AGENDA

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 10 a.m. | 1. Welcome, Call to Order and Introductions |
| | 2. Additions & Deletions to the Agenda |
| | 3. Receive Announcements from Advisory Council Members |
| | 4. Comments from Members of the Public on <u>Items Not on the Agenda</u> |
| 10:10 | 5. Consent Agenda
Approve minutes of the May 2025 Advisory Council Meeting |

175 Westridge Drive, Watsonville, California 95076 **www.seniorscouncil.org**
PHONE: AAA – (831) 688-0400 • FG/SCP – (831) 475-0816 • SCOUT – 1-877-373-8297 • FAX: (831) 688-1225

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MONTEREY, SAN BENITO, & SANTA CRUZ COUNTIES & YOUR PRIVATE DONATIONS

- | | | |
|---------|-----|---|
| 10:15 | 6. | Committee Reports |
| | | 1. Advocacy Committee |
| | | 2. California Senior Legislature |
| 10:45 | 7. | Service Provider Transitions (2025-29 RFP Results) |
| | | 1. Family Caregiver Support Program |
| | | 2. San Benito County Senior Nutrition Programs |
| | | 3. Pauline Valdivia Memorial Center & the ADRC |
| 10:45 | 8. | Invitations for Bid - Update |
| 11:05 | 9. | Program Reports (written) |
| | | 1. Foster Grandparent/Senior Companion Program |
| | | 2. Aging & Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Discussion |
| | | 3. Project SCOUT |
| 11:15 | 10. | Executive Director's Report |
| | | 1. Master Plan for Aging & Solutions Summits |
| | | 2. State & Community Activities |
| 11:50 | 11. | Miscellaneous Correspondence & Other Items |
| 12 Noon | 13. | Adjourn |

Next Meeting:
Wednesday, July 16, 2025
175 Westridge Dr., Watsonville, CA

Questions, Clarifications or Additional Information:

If you have a question or wish clarification or additional information about any agenda item or attached materials, please telephone Seniors Council Executive Director Clay Kempf at 688-0400 ext. 115 before the meeting. If you get voicemail, please leave a detailed message so that a response can be made.

Distribution of Materials:

If you have information to share with members of the Board, a table or other suitable space will be provided on which you may make it available. It is the wish of the Executive Committee that meetings not be disrupted by distribution of paperwork or other items.

Accessibility:

This organization attempts to make meeting content understandable in languages other than English. All Meeting rooms are accessible for people with disabilities. If you wish to discuss reasonable modifications or accommodations for language or disability, please contact the Seniors Council office at 688-0400 at least 48 hours before the meeting.

Seniors Council Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Seniors Council to enable older persons to function with independence and dignity in their homes and in the community to their fullest capacity.

Area Agency on Aging Mission

To provide leadership in addressing issues that relate to older Californians; to develop community-based systems of care that provide services which support independence within California's interdependent society, and which protect the quality of life of older persons and persons with functional impairment; and to promote citizen involvement in the planning and delivery of services.



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AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL
(Held in person at Watsonville office with hybrid Zoom broadcast)

May 14, 2025

MINUTES

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Steve Clark (City of Scotts Valley)
Jimmy Dutra (City of Watsonville)
Angela Curro (San Benito County Board of Supervisors)
Mindy Sotelo (San Benito County Board of Supervisors)
Scott Freels (City of San Juan Bautista)
Mark Johannessen (At-large, Seniors Commission)
Stephanie Auld, (Persons with Disabilities/Low Income)

ALTERNATES PRESENT:

Sandy Brown (alt. Cummings)
Regina Kelbert (alt. De Serpa)

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Kimberly De Serpa (Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors)
Justin Cummings (Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors)
Gerry Jensen (City of Capitola)
Gabriela Trigueiro (City of Santa Cruz)
Roxanne Stephens (Mayor, City of Hollister)

VACANCIES: CSL Rep.; At Large Rep.

STAFF PRESENT:

Clay Kempf, Seniors Council Executive Director; Patty Talbott, AAA Administrator; Zach Johnson, Seniors Council Administrative Services Officer; Corey Shaffer, Community Coordinator; Britt Bassoni, Special Projects Director

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jacques Bertrand, community member

1. Welcome, Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Sandy Brown called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM. Introductions were made.

2. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda

None.

5-1

3. Receive Announcements from Advisory Council Members

Steve will be issuing proclamation for Older Americans Month, May 21st @ 6 PM.

Angela will be giving Affordable Housing presentation for Board of Supervisors on May 20th at appx. 10:15 AM, to align with Affordable Housing Month and OAM (also on Zoom).

Clay reported that County of Santa Cruz also issued an OAM proclamation recently.

4. Comments from Members of the Public on Items Not on the Agenda

None.

5. Consent Agenda

Advisory Council members were referred to Pages 5-1 to 5-3, minutes of the April 2025 AAA Advisory Council meeting.

MOTION, Sotelo/Clark, to approve the minutes of the April 2025 AAA Advisory Council meeting.
PASSED.

6. Committee Reports

1. Advocacy Committee – Series of challenges, largest at Federal level: [temporary] closure/reduction of AmeriCorps & Administration for Community Living (ACL). AmeriCorps staff cuts directly impact Foster Grandparent/Senior Companion Programs. ACL split into multiple agencies reduces efficiency and clouds decision making. Strategy at state level is to ask CDA to hold off on any changes until 'dust settles' but they are eager to proceed. Proposed Trump budget would cut all AmeriCorps funding; many FGP/SCP volunteers are highly dependent on stipends provided by program. Article was posted in Lookout, Clay is targeting other publications, too. Now exploring alternative revenue sources, e.g. coalition with other FGP/SCP agencies for large grant. Other proposed Federal cuts on 6.1-2 include Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP), Ombudsman, and more. Stephanie asked about impacts to Medi-Cal; possibly facing cuts but won't know for sure until October at the earliest, but cuts may hit as soon as June 30. Governor's May Revise came out this morning, impacts TBD upon review. Jacques suggested creating a summary of existing funding commitments, to bring to Board of Supervisors and other meetings. Will discuss further separately.

2. California Senior Legislature –

7. Service Provider Transitions (2025-29 RFP Results)

1. Impacted Programs – Senior Network Services (SNS) withdrew from Family Caregiving Support program; Jovenes de Antaño (JdA) withdrew their application as well. Health Projects Center now taking over both counties. Martha's Kitchen replacing JdA as Meal Provider in San Benito.
2. Update – JdA providing mixed messages about staffing, expense documentation, other issues. Future of partnership is in doubt, which leaves many questions about programs, equipment, remaining funding, and building/facilities. Still need to make plans for transitioning to Martha's Kitchen taking over service on July 1. Mindy asked if MK can cover cost of rent if City does not match zero-rent program for JdA; Clay said probably, but will impact service levels. Group discussed various strategies such as political pressure on City Councilmembers and what unspent funds can be reallocated.

8. Invitations for Bid - Update

Patty presented several pots of funding from Older Americans Act small enough to do invitations to bid. Residential Home Repairs, Minor Home Repairs, Peer Counseling, and 3D Health Promotion coming next month. Seniors Council has flexibility with this process.

9. Program Reports

1. Foster Grandparent/Senior Companion Program – discussed previously; report in packet.
2. Aging & Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) – Britt pointed to 9.2.1-2 in packet, including new bus shelter ads for volunteer program and search for replacement staff to cover bilingual needs.
3. Project SCOUT – Tax season has ended; report includes over \$2.2MM in savings to clients, most of which stays in the local economy and community.

10. Executive Director's Report

1. Master Plan for Aging & Solutions Summits – MPA Local Playbooks due for submission by end of June. Next packet will include drafts.
There are still unfilled Board of Supervisor seats on MPA Governance Committee Sandy reported that Human Services Director wants to take over AAA and sees MPA GC as a vehicle. Brown Act restrictions also complicate efforts.
2. State & Community Activities – Clay pointed to first paragraph in packet report, re: SB 1249. Potential concerns: Intrastate funding formula updates (and using same formula for State & Federal dollars); Criteria for designating and de-designating AAAs (i.e. reassigning as County agency); and, CDA push for all AAAs to provide same set of core services (reduces flexibility for advocacy).

11. Miscellaneous Correspondence & Other Items

Included in packet; not discussed.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:52 AM.

Minutes prepared by: Zachary Johnson

Next meeting: **June 18, 2025**



May 27, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assembly Speaker
Assemblymember Robert Rivas
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senate President pro Tempore
Senator Mike McGuire
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Scott Wiener
Chair, Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: 153 Aging and Disability Stakeholders' Response to May Revision of Proposed 2025-26 State Budget

Dear Governor Newsom, Speaker Rivas, Pro Tem McGuire, Assemblymember Gabriel and Senator Wiener:

The undersigned **153 organizations** representing aging and disability stakeholders in California, write to you with our comments in strong opposition to Governor Newsom's May Revision to the proposed 2025-26 state budget. The May Revision includes a number of cuts to health care and long-term care for older adults and people with disabilities.

May Revision Reinstates the Punitive and Harmful Medi-Cal Asset Limit for Older Adults and People with Disabilities

We are strongly opposed to the Governor's proposal to reinstate the Medi-Cal asset limit for older adults and people with disabilities. California is in a cost-of-living crisis, and forcing older adults and people with disabilities to only have \$2,000 in savings in order to maintain Medi-Cal coverage is irreconcilable with the priorities of the Legislature and Administration.

By reinstating this policy, California will be going backwards. The Legislature and Governor approved raising (in 2022) and fully eliminating the asset limit in 2024, recognizing that the Medi-Cal asset limit unfairly impacted older adults and people with disabilities and placed them at significant risk of financial instability. Before California eliminated the asset limit, older adults and people with disabilities on Medi-Cal couldn't save for house repairs, car repairs, or any type of emergency.

Reinstating the asset limit to \$2,000 will simply result in people losing coverage, and force older adults and people with disabilities into extreme poverty. Yet, individuals who lose coverage as a result of this policy will ultimately become Medi-Cal eligible again once they have exhausted any resources they have. As a result of losing access to care, the costs to the state when they regain eligibility will likely increase because their condition will have worsened and they may no longer be able to live at home, thus requiring full time nursing facility care.

This proposal is punitive and unfairly targets older adults and people with disabilities on Medi-Cal – no other group on Medi-Cal will have an asset limit. A \$2,000 asset limit will force older adults and people with disabilities to live in deep poverty in order to access essential care, and terminate coverage for 112,000 current Medi-Cal members who have been able to accrue minimal resources.

Cutting Health Care and Long-Term Care Benefits for Immigrants

We are opposed to the Governor's proposals to cut health care coverage and benefits for immigrants. By freezing enrollment into Medi-Cal for undocumented Californians, individuals who need health care will no longer be able to qualify. For those who currently have coverage, and lose their Medi-Cal for any reason, they will be barred from regaining coverage due to the freeze.

Imposing unaffordable \$100 monthly premiums on undocumented immigrants, and immigrants under the five-year bar, will not only cause financial hardship for some of the lowest income Californians, it will also result in people losing their coverage if they are unable to pay or miss a payment.

Eliminating IHSS benefits for undocumented Californians will result in individuals losing access to the care that allows them to stay at home and in the community. This elimination also puts a significant economic burden on family caregivers, who will now have to provide uncompensated care.

Finally, removing Medi-Cal coverage of long-term care, and dental benefits for undocumented immigrants, and immigrants under the five-year bar deprives people of critical

care. By excluding these benefits from Medi-Cal, people will go with unmet needs until their conditions worsen to such a degree that they require emergency-level care. Immigrants under the 5-year bar are lawfully present and stripping away care now will lead to preventable conditions that require intensive, and expensive, care when this group reaches their 5-year residency and gain access to long-term care, and dental benefits.

These policy changes combined mean that immigrants would now be paying for *less* coverage than they previously had with no ability to save for any costs with the reinstatement of the asset limit.

These cuts also undermine the trust that California has worked to build with immigrant communities over the past decade and will raise doubts about its commitment to health access for all Californians. Since the first expansion of Medi-Cal to children in 2016, the Department of Health Care Services, in conjunction with enrollment navigators and consumer advocacy organizations, have put in considerable work to assuage fears of enrolling in Medi-Cal. Instituting the freeze, assessing premiums, and cutting benefits will lead to confusion and fear that other Medi-Cal services or coverage entirely will be stripped away.

Reducing In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Overtime Hours

Finally, we are opposed to the Governor's proposal to reduce overtime hours for IHSS and exemptions to the overtime cap. These exemptions are essential to ensuring that people with complex needs get the care they need without impoverishing their live-in caregivers. Reducing hours will harm family caregivers by forcing them to provide free care, impacting their already fragile economic security. This proposal will also harm older adults who have no family members and depend on non-family IHSS providers. Without the overtime exemption, providers will need to work for less consumers and it will become harder for consumers to find providers that can meet their needs. The cut in overtime hours will especially harm both consumers and providers in rural areas in California, where provider shortages are most acute and the overtime exemption is critical.

A Revenue Solution is Needed to Ensure California Can Sustain the Safety Net

We recognize that the state faces very real budget shortfalls. However, we know from experience that any short-term budget relief that may come from weakening the safety-net only leads to deeper and more challenging problems in the future. The demographics of California are shifting rapidly. By 2030, one in four Californians will be over the age of 60, and many will live on low, fixed incomes. We cannot cut our way out of this demographic challenge. To ensure that access to health care and other critical services remain accessible to all of us as we age, we need to focus on raising revenue - not cutting services. These proposed policies undermine the Governor and Legislature's commitment to creating communities where older adults and people with disabilities are valued and cared for. Our organizations urge the Legislature and Administration to prevent these harmful proposals from taking effect.

Sincerely,

Access Central Coast
 Agency on Aging Area 4
 Aging and HIV Institute
 Aging Services
 Collaborative of Santa
 Clara County
 Ahri Center
 Alameda Alliance for
 Health
 Alameda County Advisory
 Commission on Aging
 Alzheimer's Association
 Alzheimer's Los Angeles
 Alzheimer's Orange
 County
 American Federation of
 State, County and
 Municipal Employees, AFL-
 CIO
 Archstone Foundation
 Area 1 Agency on Aging
 Ashby Village
 Asian Resources, Inc.
 Association of California
 Caregiver Resource
 Centers
 Bet Tzedek Legal Services
 Black Women for Wellness
 Action Project
 CA Senior Legislature
 California Advocates for
 Nursing Home Reform
 California Alliance for
 Retired Americans
 California Association for
 Adult Day Services
 California Association of
 Area Agencies on Aging
 (C4A)
 California Association of
 Public Authorities for IHSS
 California Child Care
 Resource & Referral
 Network
 California Coalition on
 Family Caregiving
 California Collaborative
 for Long-Term Services
 and Supports (CCLTSS)

California Domestic
 Workers Coalition
 California Elder Justice
 Coalition
 California Foundation for
 Independent Living
 Centers
 California Health
 Advocates
 California IHSS Consumer
 Alliance (CICA)
 California Immigrant
 Policy Center
 California Latinas for
 Reproductive Justice
 California Pan-Ethnic
 Health Network (CPEHN)
 California Resource
 Services for Independent
 Living
 California Work & Family
 Coalition
 CalPACE
 Cardea Health
 Caring Across
 Generations
 Center for Access to
 QDROs
 Center for Asian
 Americans in Action
 Center for Health Care
 Rights
 Chinatown Service Center
 Choice in Aging
 Coalition of California
 Welfare Rights
 Organizations
 Communities Actively
 Living Independent & Free
 Community Access
 Center
 Community Access
 Center
 Community Legal Aid
 SoCal
 Community Legal Services
 in East Palo Alto
 Community Living
 Campaign

Community Resources for
 Independent Living
 Community Resources for
 Independent Living
 Contra Costa Senior Legal
 Services
 Corporation for
 Supportive Housing
 Courage California
 CPCA Advocates
 Disability Action Center
 Disability Rights California
 Disability Rights Education
 and Defense Fund
 (DREDF)
 Eden Area Village
 ElderHelp of San Diego
 Empowered Aging
 End Child Poverty CA
 Family Caregiver Alliance
 Food Empowerment
 Project
 FREED Center for
 Independent Living
 Friends Committee on
 Legislation of California
 Graton Day Labor Center
 Hand in Hand: The
 Domestic Employers
 Network
 Health Access California
 Health Projects Center
 Healthy Contra Costa
 HICAP SAN Mateo County
 Home Health Care
 Management Inc
 Home Match
 Homeless Action Center
 Hospital to Home Alliance
 of Ventura County
 IHSS Public Authority of
 Marin
 Independent Living
 Resource Center SF
 Independent Living
 Resources of Solano &
 Contra Costa Counties
 Inland Caregiver
 Resource Center

Inland Coalition for
Immigrant Justice
Inland Coalition on Aging
Inner City Law Center
InSpirit
Insure the Uninsured
Project
J Gould Consulting
Jewish Family Service LA
Justice in Aging
LA Care
LA Care
La Raza Centro Legal, SF
Lake County Social
Services
Law Foundation of Silicon
Valley
LeadingAge California
Legal Aid Society of San
Diego
Legal Aid Society of San
Mateo County
Legal Assistance for
Seniors
Legal Assistance to the
Elderly
Lifelong Medical care
LifeSTEPS
Long Beach Gray
Panthers
Los Angeles LGBT Center
Marin Center for
Independent Living
Maternal and Child Health
Access
Meals on Wheels Diablo
Region

Mental Health Advocacy
Services
MSSP Site Association
National Health Law
Program
Nourishing Justly
Openhouse
Orange County Aging
Services Collaborative
Our Family Coalition
Parent Voices, California
Personal Assistance
Services Council
Pilipino Workers Center
Public Interest Law Project
Public Law Center
Pula Legal Interpreting
Network
Pushing Limits Radio &
Podcast
Resources for
Independence Central
Valley
Riverside Legal Aid
Saahas for Cause
San Diego Senior Alliance
San Francisco IHSS Public
Authority
SEIU California
Senior Advocacy Network
Senior Advocates of the
Desert
Senior and Disability
Action
Senior Coastsiders
Senior Services Coalition
of Alameda County

Seniors Council of Santa
Cruz & San Benito
Counties
Serving Seniors
SF Disability and Aging
Services
SF Senior and Disability
Action
Silicon Valley
Independent Living
Center
Sistahs Aging with Grace
& Elegance
South Asian Network
Southeast Asia Resource
Action Center (SEARAC)
St. Barnabus Senior
Services
St. Mary's Center
The Center for
Independent Living
The Children's Partnership
UDW/AFSCME Local 3930
United Way of Greater Los
Angeles
Urban & Environmental
Policy Institute,
Occidental College
Via Care
Vision y Compromiso
Western Center on Law
and Poverty
Wise & Healthy Aging
Yolo County In-Home
Supportive Services
Advisory Committee

Cc: Secretary Kim Johnson, California Health and Human Services Agency
Michelle Baass, Director, California Department of Health Care Services
Jennifer Troia, Director, California Department of Social Services
Joe Stephenshaw, Director, California Department of Finance
Susan DeMarois, Director, California Department of Aging
Senator Dr. Akilah Weber-Pierson, Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #3
Assemblymember Dawn Addis, Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee # 1
Assemblymember Dr. Corey Jackson, Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2
Paula Villescaz, Deputy Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom

Richard Figueroa, Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Marjorie Swartz, Policy Consultant, Senate President pro Tempore Mike McGuire
Mareva Brown, Policy Consultant, Senate President pro Tempore Mike McGuire
Scott Ogus, Deputy Staff Director, Senate Budget Committee
Elizabeth Schmitt, Committee Consultant, Senate Budget Committee
Rosielyn Pulmano, Policy Consultant, Speaker Robert Rivas
Kelsy Castillo, Policy Consultant, Speaker Robert Rivas
Nicole Vasquez, Deputy Chief Consultant, Assembly Budget Committee
Patrick Le, Committee Consultant, Assembly Budget Committee
Elizabeth Fuller, Chief Consultant, Assembly Aging and Long-Term Care Committee



AREA AGENCY ON AGING CSL UPDATE

June 2025

- Leg Proposals

- 2024

Three CSL proposals were picked up by legislators by the January 2025 deadline. (See Attached CSL Leg Report) They are:

- SB239 (SP4 – SS Lipson) Sen Arreguin - Open meetings: teleconferencing: subsidiary body. 6/03/2025: Ordered to inactive file on request of Senator Arreguín. SB707 Sen Durazo (Principal Co-Author Sen Arrequin) 5-29-2025: Amended in the Senate.
- SB508 (SA1 – SA Clough) - Out-of-State physicians and surgeons: telehealth: license exemption. 6/05/2025: Referred to Business and Professions Committee.
- Budget Ask (SP5 ASM Aherns) – Personal Needs Allowance. ASM Aherns has pursued a budget ask. No committee hearing to date has occurred.

A summary of CSL letters of support can be found in the attached CSL Leg Report.

- 2025

2025 CSL Legislative Proposal were due by June 1, 2025.

- Legislative Calendar

The following are key dates for the months of May and June 2025.

June	2-6	Floor Session only
	6	Last day for each house to pass bills in that house
	9	Committee meetings may resume
	15	Budget bill must be passed by midnight

6.2-1

May7, 2025

6.2-2



Legislative Report

CSL Sponsored Bills/Top Priorities

June 9, 2025

BILL #	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	CSL AUTHOR	STATUS
SB 508	Valladares	<u>Out-of-State physicians and surgeons: telehealth: license exemption.</u> This bill would expand life-threatening disease requirement of an eligible patient to include a person who has been diagnosed with any stage of cancer and would provide that cancer patients are not subject to the clinical trial requirement.	Clough AP-1	Click for current status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB508
SB 239/ SB 707	Arreguin/ Durazo	<u>Open Meetings: teleconferencing: subsidiary body.</u> This bill would authorize a subsidiary body to use alternative teleconferencing provisions and would impose requirements for notice, agenda and public participation. See bill language for additional requirements.	Lipson SP-4	Click for current status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB239 Amended SB 707: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB707
Budget Ask	Ahrens	<u>Increase Medi-Cal Personal Needs Allowance.</u> This request would increase the personal needs allowance from \$35 to \$50 per month and require that the amount be increased annually up to the amount of any cost-of-living adjustment implemented by the US Social Security Administration.	Lopez SP-5	

CSL Support Bills

BILL #	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STATUS
AB 1	Connolly	Residential Property Insurance: Wildfire risk. This measure would require before January 1, 2030, and very five years after, the Department of Insurance to consider whether or not to update regulations to include additional building hardening measures for property level mitigation efforts and communitywide wildfire mitigation programs. This would also include the Department to identify additional building hardening measures to consider as well as require public participation during the evaluation.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB1
AB 96	Jackson	Community Health Workers This bill would also specify for these purposes that a "community health worker" includes a peer support specialist and would deem a certified peer support specialist to have satisfied all education and training requirements developed by the department for certification as a community health worker.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB96
AB 99	Ta	Electrical Corporations: Rates This bill would prohibit an electrical corporation from proposing, and the commission from approving, a rate increase above the rate of inflation, unless the rate increase is approved by a majority of the electrical corporation's customers voting in an election conducted according to specified requirements, and except when the commission determines that the costs underlying the rate increase are directly related to safety enhancements and modernization or to higher commodity or fuel costs.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB99
AB 280	Aguiar-Curry	Health Care Coverage: Provider Directories This bill would significantly enhance the accuracy of provider directories in CA's health care system. Requiring insurers to annually verify and delete inaccurate listings.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB280
AB 315	Bonta	Medi-Cal Home & Community Based Alternative Waiver This bill seeks to expand access to and improve the quality of the Home and Community-Based Alternatives (HCBA) Waiver within California's Medi-Cal program.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB315
AB 508	Aguiar-Curry	Residential Care Facility for Elderly: Direct Care Ratios This bill would require Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFEs) to calculate and disclose daily direct care ratios to residents, their representatives, and the public.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB508

6.2-3

BILL #	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STATUS
AB 517	Krell 6.2-4	Medi-Cal Complex Rehabilitation Technology Wheelchairs This bill addresses the essential needs of Medi-Cal beneficiaries who rely on complex rehabilitation technology (CRT), particularly powered wheelchairs, for their mobility and independence.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB517
AB 561	Quirk Silva	Alternative Service of Elder Abuse Restraining Orders This bill aims to improve access to protective orders for elder and dependent adults by allowing for electronic filings and remote hearings, among other vital changes.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB561
AB 804	Wicks	Medi-Cal Housing Support Services This bill seeks to expand Medi-Cal coverage to include critical housing support services for individuals who are either experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB804
AB 1068	Bains	Long Term Care Emergency Response System This bill seeks to enhance emergency services and preparedness for older Californians and individuals with disabilities during natural disasters.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB1068
AB 1069	Bains	Older Adults: Emergency Shelters This bill would, as part of disaster planning and response, require that an area agency on aging or an ADRC program have access to an emergency shelter, as defined, established for evacuation purposes during an active event, in order to ensure that older adults and persons with disabilities receive continuous services and necessary support. To the extent that the bill would create new duties for local officials with regard to administrative operations for emergency shelters, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB1069
AB 1161	Harabedian	Public Benefits Protection for Disaster Survivors This bill would provide continuous eligibility for key public social services programs to Californians who are displaced or otherwise affected by a state of emergency or health emergency.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260AB1161
SB 29	Laird	Civil Actions: Decedent's Cause of Action This bill would remove the limitation on the recoverability of damages for pain, suffering, or disfigurement described above and the related reporting requirements, and would make all loss and damages the decedent sustained or incurred before death generally recoverable by the representative or successor of the decedent.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB29

BILL #	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STATUS
SB 242	Blakespear	<u>Medicare supplement coverage: open enrollment periods.</u> This bill will give more rights to people with Medicare who seek to purchase Medicare Supplemental Health Insurance (Medigap). Specifically, the bill would create an annual Medigap open enrollment period and stop health insurance companies from denying coverage or raising premiums because of preexisting medical conditions.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB242
SB 250	Ochoa Bogh	<u>Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan Skilled Nursing Facility Directory</u> This bill enhances the accessibility of information for Medi-Cal beneficiaries by requiring skilled nursing facilities to be included in the Medi-Cal Managed Care Health Care Options provider directory.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB250
SB 324	Menjivar	<u>Medi-Cal: Enhanced care management & Community Supports.</u> This bill would require a Medi-Cal managed care plan, for purposes of covering the ECM benefit, or if it elects to cover a community support, to give preference to contracting with community providers, as defined, whenever those providers are available in the respective county and have experience in providing the applicable ECM or community support.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB324
SB 412	Limon	<u>Training on Dementia for Home Care Aides</u> This bill requires home care aides to complete additional training on the special care needs of clients with dementia, both prior to providing services and on an annual basis thereafter.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB412
SB 433	Wahab	<u>Residential Care Facility for the Elderly Assisted Living Waiver Rental Rate Protection</u> This bill ensures that residential care facilities do not charge seniors a rate higher than that charged to those receiving State Supplementary Payments (SSP), which is vital for ensuring that older adults can remain in their communities and maintain a level of independence. The bill also mandates that RCFEs contracted with Medi-Cal providers charge no more than the difference between the resident's income and the personal and incidental needs amount, as defined by the Department of Social Services.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB433
SB 434	Wahab	<u>Residential Care Facility for Elderly Eviction Protections</u> This bill aims to enhance the housing protections for residents in Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFEs) by providing clear eviction processes and safeguarding the rights of our most vulnerable population—older Californians.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB434

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BILL #	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STATUS
SB 530	Richardson 6.2-6	Protecting Medi-Cal Provider Access This bill extends and strengthens Medi-Cal time and distance standards and improves access to timely healthcare services for Medi-Cal beneficiaries.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB530
SB 590	Durazo	Paid Family Leave for Family of Choice This measure expands eligibility for paid family leave to include individuals who take time off work to care for a seriously ill designated person.	Click for Current Status: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB590
Budget		ADRCs Expansion and Increased Funding. C4A is requesting an additional \$15 million in FY 25-26 as a first step toward full statewide ADRC funding of \$62 million annually. This increased funding will expand ADRCs to underserved regions, strengthen existing ADRC operations to meet rising demand, support AAAs and ILCs in establishing new ADRCs, preventing gaps in LTSS access.	
Budget		Stop HomeSafe from Sunsetting The Home Safe program supports the safety and housing stability of older adults and those with disabilities who are clients of APS. The program has been highly effective, but is due to end in June 2026.	
Budget		Continue Community Living Funding This was a 3 year initiative designed to support the MPA. The program was designed to enhance the capacity of disability and aging services to provide person centered transition & diversion services for individuals of all ages & disabilities. This should also be expanded to include AAAs, and an allocation for designated and emerging ADRC.	
Budget		California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association Request for \$15.9 Million in ongoing annual funding from two special funds that currently fund California's 35 local Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs	



AREA AGENCY ON AGING
San Benito & Santa Cruz Counties

FOSTER GRANDPARENT/SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM
Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara & Santa Cruz Counties

PROJECT SCOUT
Tax Counseling Assistance

AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CONNECTION
Navigating the San Benito County Senior & Disability Services Network

Date: 6-13-25

To: Seniors Council Board of Directors
AAA Advisory Council

From: Clay Kempf, Executive Director

RE: Service Provider Transitions Update

BACKGROUND

Several transitions in our service provider network are underway, as we've discussed at many previous meetings. The catalyst for these changes, of course, is our 2025-29 Request for Proposals process. Changes are occurring regarding the Family Caregiver Support Program in both Santa Cruz & San Benito County, shifting from Senior Network Services and Jovenes de Antaño to Health Projects Center after both SNS & JdA withdrew from the application process. Both Home-delivered Meals & Congregate Dining services in San Benito County are being transferred from Jovenes de Antaño to Martha's Kitchen. And lastly, prior to the RFP process, a decision was made to transfer Information and Assistance and Case Management from Jovenes de Antaño to the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC), since the ADRC also provides those services. At the time, the ADRC was a partnership between ourselves, the Central Coast Center for Independent Living, and Jovenes de Antaño.

FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM STATUS UPDATE

Health Projects Center is interacting with our staff regularly to complete the transition and align themselves with us and the services we need to provide. Senior Network Services has been very cooperative with transferring information throughout the process. And I'm happy to report that as of this past week, Jovenes de Antaño is also engaging in a cooperative approach to the upcoming changes. Tami Aviles, Cathy Colvard and I had a very productive meeting with Jovenes Board President Tami Erickson and JdA fiscal manager Jonathan Hernandez this week and laid out the groundwork for the transfer of information. We're very appreciative of this change.

SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM STATUS UPDATE

Again, a positive turn of events here, with Jovenes now taking a cooperative approach to the transfer of services, and cooperating with us and with Martha's Kitchen. We'll be holding shared meetings with lunch participants on both Monday, June 23rd, and

175 Westridge Dr., Watsonville, CA. 95076 **www.seniorscouncil.org**
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Tuesday, June 24th to answer any questions they may have about continuation of services. Jovenes, Martha's Kitchen, and the San Benito County Local Transportation Authority (LTA) will all be present. As most of you know, Jovenes also lost their service contract with the LTA. Jovenes is now committing to prioritizing the needs of seniors in the role they play during this transition, and reassuring them that they'll continue to receive all the services currently being provided.

PAULINE VALDIVIA COMMUNITY CENTER, THE ADRC, & RELATED UPDATES

The City of Hollister has also been integral in these transitions, especially City Manager Dave Mirrione and Parks and Recreation Director Charles Wall. Due to budget shortfalls, the City will now be charging rent at the Pauline Valdivia Community Center, but David and Charles are being extremely cooperative in making sure services continue and the building layout is conducive to senior services. Martha's Kitchen will be renting office space, plus the kitchen and dining hall so that meals will be provided at the same location. The Seniors Council will occupy two small offices in order to provide the ADRC services that Jovenes previously offered; at times, we anticipate that the Central Coast Center for Independent Living (CCCIL) will share some of that space to help with coverage at the center. CCCIL has been expanding their San Benito County service as part of the ADRC partnership, and older adults and people with disabilities are the beneficiaries of that effort; just as we had hoped when the ADRC was created. Meanwhile, we are recruiting for a new ADRC bilingual staff person to work 30-40 hours per week at the center. Jovenes previously provided staff, but she left earlier this year and wasn't replaced.

AAA ADVISORY COUNCIL and BOARD OF DIRECTORS ACTION

No actions are needed at this time.



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AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CONNECTION
Navigating the San Benito County Senior & Disability Services Network

DATE: June 13, 2025
FROM: Patty Talbott, AAA Administrator
TO: AAA Advisory Council
Seniors Council Board of Directors
RE: INVITATION TO BID FOR SMALL GRANTS

Background: The Department of Aging allows AAA's to issue Invitations for Bids for small contracts. Our guidance states that an AAA need only obtain bids from qualified sources and informally select the source with which to obtain the service. We have not done this in the past, and are pleased to have the opportunity to utilize a more efficient process for small awards for very specific services.

The services we requested bids for were:

- Title IIIB Residential Repairs/Minor Modifications - \$25,000 (Santa Cruz Co. only)
- Title IIIB Peer Counseling /Visiting - \$15,000 (Santa Cruz County only)
- Title IIID Health Promotion - \$22,000 - specifically for a certified Matter of Balance provider to implement and coordinate evidence-based Matter of Balance classes in both Santa Cruz & San Benito Counties (\$22,000)

We are seeking one provider for each service.

Bids Received:

- Two bids were received for Residential Repairs, one from the Volunteer Center and one from Damien's Ladder.
- One bid was received for the Senior Peer Counseling/Visiting Program from Family Service Agency.
- One bid was received for Title IIID Health Promotion from the Volunteer Center, which is actively conducting a Matter of Balance program in Santa Cruz and has branched into San Benito County, but is not receiving AAA funding.

After review, staff recommends the following:

- Award \$15,000 to Family Service Agency to support the Senior Peer Counseling and Visiting Program in Santa Cruz County.
- Award \$25,000 to the Volunteer Center to provide home safety inspections and Residential Repairs/Minor Home Modifications in Santa Cruz County. Although both bidders are doing great work in the community, the Volunteer Center's depth of experience and projected services to be provided resulted in staff recommending this provider.
- Award \$22,000 of Title IIID funding to the Volunteer Center to coordinate and provide a two-county evidence-based Matter of Balance program.

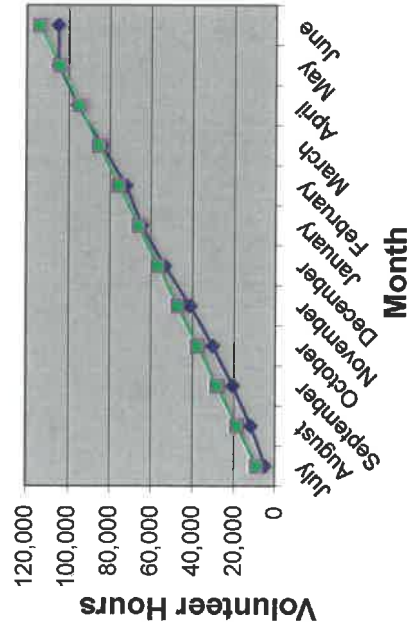
ACTION REQUESTED: Review and approval of small grant applications.

Project Name: Seniors Council Foster Grandparent Program
Grant Year: 7/1/24- 6/30/25

Month	Cumulative Cumulative		Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Annual
	Hours	Actual	Hours	Goal	VSYS	Actual	Hours	Vols.	VSYS
									Goal
July	5,316	5,316	9,483	5.09	9.08	5,316	124	4,976	109
August	12,312	12,312	18,966	6.70	9.08	6,996	120	5,585	109
September	21,105	21,105	28,449	8.42	9.08	8,793	118	6,893	109
October	30,551	30,551	37,932	9.05	9.08	9,446	116	7,363	109
November	41,496	41,496	47,415	10.48	9.08	10,945	115	10,355	109
December	53,761	53,761	56,898	11.75	9.08	12,266	116	12,862	109
January	64,540	64,540	66,381	10.32	9.08	10,779	117	10,827	109
February	72,560	72,560	75,864	7.68	9.08	8,020	120	7,179	109
March	83,951	83,951	85,347	10.91	9.08	11,392	120	10,382	109
April	95,617	95,617	94,830	11.17	9.08	11,665	121	10,621	109
May	104,835	104,835	104,313	8.83	9.08	9,218	121	8,487	109
June	104,835	104,835	113,796	0.00	9.08			5,739	109
TOTAL				100.42		104,835		101,267	

Total
VSYS
Achieved

VSYS Actual to Target (Cumulative)



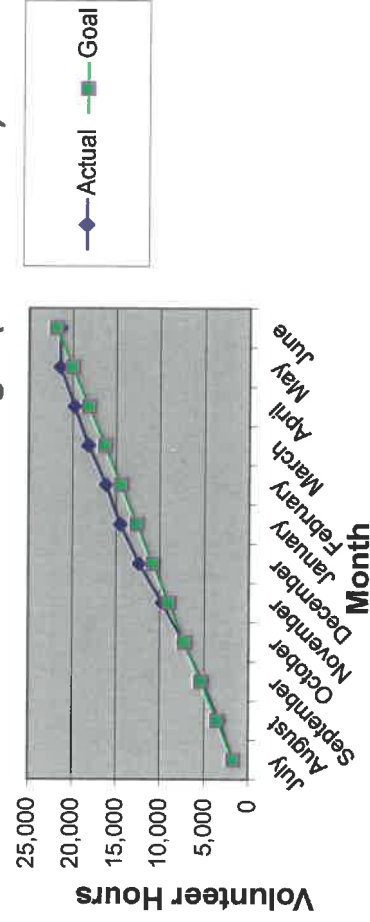
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Project Name: Seniors Council Senior Companion Program
Grant Year: 7/1/24- 6/30/25

Month	Cumulative			Monthly			Monthly			Annual		
	Hours	Actual	Goal	Hours	VSYS	Actual	Hours	VSYS	Actual	Hours	VSYS	Goal
July		1,837	1,827	1,76	1.75	1,837	29	1,837	29	1,540	21	21
August		3,444	3,654	1.54	1.75	1,608	29	1,608	29	1,312	21	21
September		5,353	5,481	1.83	1.75	1,909	29	1,909	29	1,640	21	21
October		7,408	7,308	1.97	1.75	2,055	31	2,055	31	1,691	21	21
November		9,911	9,135	2.40	1.75	2,504	31	2,504	31	2,498	21	21
December		12,525	10,962	2.50	1.75	2,614	30	2,614	30	3,189	21	21
January		14,684	12,789	2.07	1.75	2,159	30	2,159	30	2,485	21	21
February		16,327	14,616	1.57	1.75	1,643	33	1,643	33	1,802	21	21
March		18,315	16,443	1.90	1.75	1,989	33	1,989	33	2,516	21	21
April		19,900	18,270	1.52	1.75	1,585	33	1,585	33	2,522	21	21
May		21,483	20,097	1.52	1.75	1,583	30	1,583	30	1,940	21	21
June		21,483	21,924	0.00	1.75					1,787	21	21
TOTAL				20.58		21,483				24,921		

Total
VSYS
Achieved

VSY Actual to Target (Cumulative)





ADRC of San Benito County Staff Report - June 2025

The ADRC of San Benito County will be the new State-designated and Federally-funded aging services Information & Assistance (I&A) provider, under Title IIIB, for San Benito County in FY25/26. In addition to providing Enhanced Information, Referral, and Assistance (I/R&A) as the ADRC has traditionally provided, we will now receive locally originating calls to the State of California's Aging & Adult Information Line at 800-510-2020. If a call to that number originates from San Benito County, or even from a cell phone connecting to transmission towers located in San Benito County, then the State's Info Line will redirect to the ADRC of San Benito County at 888-637-6757.

While there are some differences in the depth of the information, referral, and assistance provided under the Title IIIB, compared to State of California ADRC guidelines, the ADRC of San Benito County will treat all calls similarly, providing each individual caller with the tailored information or direction they need to access the service or services which they are seeking. Of course, many calls will be satisfied by simply providing a telephone number, or answering a question about an appropriate service or resource. In other cases, and sometimes beyond the required scope of work for the approximately \$20,000 Title IIIB funding the ADRC will be receiving, we will provide enhanced I&R/A, as needed - - the ADRC standard - - including: more detailed explanations of service choices or options; assistance with accessing services from identified partner organizations and other sources via warm referrals; application assistance; and follow-up calls or messages to determine if the desired service was obtained, or if further assistance might be needed. We will also share our printed and on-line San Benito County Aging & Disability Resources Directory - - the maintenance and availability of which is also required to receive Title IIIB funding - - with individuals who wish to receive a copy.

An additional service offering we will also now be providing under Title IIIB is Case Management support. While the ADRC does already provide Short Term Service Coordination for up to 90 days under its ADRC contract with the State of California, this small additional \$5,000 grant will also help supplement the delivery of such support, as necessary, to address consumer and caregiver needs. Utilization of these funds requires the consumer receive a comprehensive needs assessment, and that we develop - - along with the consumer - - a care plan to help them to help them maintain independence and well-being in their home environment. The ADRC has worked to develop a very detailed enrollment form for consumers wishing to avail themselves of this short-term support. ADRC Program Coordinators maintain a case blend of consumers with a range of needs, and at various stages of address, and hopefully successful resolution. Some consumers reach back out to the ADRC Program Coordinator they worked with previously, to help address needs that arise later. Other times, consumers move into more sustainable and longer-term care/case management relationships with more involved or greater resources partners, such as a private healthcare insurers, County Behavioral Health, or Public Authority.

Both service augmentations will help the ADRC be more financial sustainable, while also aligning this local work with State of California goals to make ADRCs the focal point of aging and disabilities Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) and community supports information and service access. We will continue to work with our existing No Wrong Door Network of partner service providers to share

9.2-1

information about their services, make referrals, and provide decision-support and access and enrollment assistance to help consumers and caregivers get the services they need.

And, now a little about changes to the ADRC's current service operations, locations, and partnerships for the coming service year, beginning July 1, 2025. One major change will be the loss of one of our Core Partners, Jovenes de Antaño, to our No Wrong Door Network. Jovenes is currently in the process of re-organizing, or even possibly closing down, and we have elected to allow them the time and space to make changes necessary for them to continue in some new capacity, should they choose to do so. Our other Core Partner in the local ADRC effort is the Central Coast Center for Independent Living (CCCIL), and we will continue to rely on them for additional staffing support, as well as for disability service supports expertise. CCCIL maintains an office, delivering ADRC service supports, over at the County Workforce Development Office at 1111 San Felipe Road, in Hollister. Currently, Sandy Castro is the CCCIL Case Manager serving out of that office.

We have also just recently recommitted to renting and staffing an ADRC office at the Pauline Valdivia Memorial Community Center (PVMCC), in Hollister. Since Seniors Council will also be hiring to fill the ADRC Coordinator position, formerly overseen by Jovenes de Antaño and position vacated by Kaitlyn Amador in early April, there is a possibility the PVMCC office site could be staffed by the new hire, as we are looking to hire a Spanish bi-lingual individual to fill the role. Currently Leanne Oliveira is the longest tenured ADRC Program Coordinator, and she is located at the ADRC's Community Foundation for San Benito County Epicenter office, at 440 San Benito Street, in Hollister. She is not a bi-lingual Spanish-speaker.

Whether we finally occupy three offices in three different locations, or two offices in two locations, we will want to be available and readily accessible to community consumers and caregivers, and we are excited to have an opportunity to reengage at the PVMCC. As the site of congregate meals, and the historical hub of aging services in San Benito County, making ADRC No Wrong Door direct service supports available through a site there will be a benefit to older adults and individuals living with disability in Hollister.

Returning to the topic of the open ADRC Program Coordinator position, please contact Britt Bassoni at 831-688-0400 x113, or brittb@seniorscouncil.org, if you'd like to get a copy of the finalized posting for this fully benefitted 35-38 hours/week position. We will also make it available on our website, through local job boards, and via organizational e-mail distribution, such as to Board Members, Advisory Council Members, ALTCC Members, the Community Foundation for San Benito County, and other community providers and supporters.

Lastly, we are also finalizing our FY25/26 ADRC budget for submission to CDA. As mentioned previously, we are receiving some additional funding support beyond our usual State provided baseline funds, however as also discussed here, we will likely also incur additional space costs. More exciting, however, is that we have made available \$1,500/ADRC Program Coordinator for each to pursue a training opportunity this year. This is a demonstration of the project's commitment to on-going professional enhancement, which in turn is a commitment to providing knowledgeable and capable support to the consumers with whom they work.

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AREA AGENCY ON AGING
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PROJECT SCOUT
Tax Counseling Assistance

FALLS PREVENTION PROGRAM
Emergency Response Systems, Assessments & Training

PROJECT SCOUT

End of MAY 2025 Report

As regular tax season has come to an end, Project SCOUT's main focus in May has been on program reporting and grant management, to complete and communicate with clients who did not complete returns during the regular tax season, as well as ramping up our assessment of senior clients who came to us for free tax preparation and who may qualify for CalFresh.

Free tax preparation options in May:

1. Project SCOUT Facilitated Self Assistance ALL Online: <http://tinyurl.com/SCOUTFSA>
2. Project SCOUT TCE ALL (Remote and ad-hoc for at-risk seniors and disabled)
3. Santa Cruz Public Library Downtown (One Saturday per month)
4. Aptos Public Library (one Tuesday per month)
5. La Manzana Community Center Watsonville (one Wednesday per month)
6. Watsonville Public Library (one Wednesday per month)
7. Watsonville Senior Center (Walk-ins and by appointment)

Project SCOUT MAY Tax Production Totals

Project SCOUT Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Tax Preparation Totals:

- Number of Federal returns prepared – 1928
- Dollar Amount of Federal refunds – \$1,435,552.00
- Dollar Amount of State refunds – \$344,828.00
- Dollar Amount of EITC Claimed – \$460,080.00
- ITIN Taxpayer returns – 66

Dollar Amount of TOTAL refunds – **\$1,780,380.00**

Total money back in the wallets of our clients, including average return cost of \$250.00 – **\$2,262,380.00!**

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Project SCOUT MAY CALFRESH Services

Project SCOUT's Calfresh services had been limited up to now as most of our efforts had been guided to supporting the demand for tax assistance. The following shows our efforts through assessments of those senior and disabled clients who came to us during tax season for free tax prep:

- Number of Senior/disabled clients assessed for services TOTAL – 193
- Number of clients who completed Calfresh application TOTAL – 4
- Number of clients who completed Calfresh application (San Benito County) – 0
- Number of clients who completed Calfresh application (Santa Cruz County) – 4
- Number of Senior/disabled clients assessed for services (Santa Benito County) – 6
- Number of Senior/disabled clients assessed for services (Santa Cruz County)– 187

Project SCOUT May Services Highlights:

Project SCOUT assisted a woman who had been having difficulties in renewing her Calfresh with the county. Through the efforts of our committed staff, and after 6 contacts with client which amounts to hours spent, the client was successful in submitting forms and paperwork needed for the client to renew and continue receiving CalFresh.



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Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara & Santa Cruz Counties

PROJECT SCOUT
Tax Counseling Assistance

AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CONNECTION
Navigating the San Benito County Senior & Disability Services Network

Date: 6-13-25

To: Seniors Council Board of Directors, AAA Advisory Council

From: Clay Kempf, Executive Director

RE: Executive Director's June Report

MASTER PLAN FOR AGING (MPA) & SOLUTIONS SUMMITS

Solutions Summit workgroups are wrapping up the writing of our Master Plan for Aging Local Playbooks, per our previous report. Each of the ten workgroups continue, with those in San Benito County being chaired and organized by Corey Shafer, and Zach Johnson doing the same for the five groups in Santa Cruz County. Draft write-ups for each workgroup have been developed by Zach and Corey, with some additional input from Elizabeth Byrd from the County of Santa Cruz. Our due date for the final document is the end of this month.

Zach and Corey deserve tremendous credit for not just convening these meetings, but also for leading the actual writing of the Local Playbooks. The final playbooks will of course be shared with both the Board & Advisory Council, and local cities and counties. The County of Santa Cruz has taken on the responsibility of getting local cities to endorse it via the quarterly meetings of the County's Master Plan for Aging Governance Committee.

Once the playbooks are completed, we'll redesign the makeup and meeting frequency of the Solutions Summit workgroups, as they'll morph into more of an implementation mode rather than creative design.

AGENCY OPERATIONS & FUNDING

Our internal operations have been somewhat overwhelmed for the past two months with the threats of defunding our Foster Grandparent & Senior Companion Programs, the changing status of the Administration for Community Living and related funding; provider transitions, local funding, CDA's upcoming changes to AAA structure, and as always, interacting with other organizations. The impacts of Jovenes de Antaño's reporting and financial struggles are probably consuming as much of our staff's time as all of our other contracted service providers combined.

The status of our Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs is looking more optimistic than a month ago, but serious concerns continue. On the positive side, 24 states, including California, were successful in their lawsuit to stop Trump and DOGE from firing 80% of AmeriCorps staff and halting all program funding immediately, even though current funding is part of the Oct 1 2024-September 30 Federal Budget and the Continuing Resolution under which everyone is operating. Additionally, the renewal of year three of our three-year grant for each program has finally been approved! However, we are concerned that those two grants (July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026) may be abruptly discontinued on Oct 1, 2025 if the proposed Trump Budget passes and continues to de-fund the program. We're hopeful but unable to confirm that the 2025-26 portion of the grant is included in the current budget.

Governor Newsom's Calif Budget May revise did NOT cut funding for Older Americans Act or Older California Act funding, so that is very good news. Most of the state human services cuts centered around reducing benefit eligibility, especially for non-documented individuals, starting in Jan 2026. While these cuts have substantial impacts on older adults and people with disabilities, we're relieved that AAA funding remains mostly intact.

Our initial Budget from CDA includes the elimination of The Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP) and a reduction of about \$100,000 in Home-Delivered Meals. NSIP is slated for reduction in the Trump Budget but not elimination. The cut to Home-delivered meals is being explained to us by CDA as a result of matching this year's allocation to the current Continuing Resolution. NSIP was about \$94,000 at the beginning of 2024-25 before its mid-year cuts that dropped the allocation to about \$58,000

FEDERAL, STATE & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

California Department of Aging (CDA) ongoing series of webinars to address their Aging 2030 goals, including the implementation of SB 1249. Presentations regarding Revising the Intrastate Funding Formula, Designation and de-designation of AAAs, and the creation of additional AAA Services and Performance Measures have continued. CDA is asking AAA's to provide input via surveys following the webinars. We're very concerned about some of the directions indicated in those surveys, and even more about how or even if CDA intends to dialogue with the AAA network about these changes, and about elements that continue to be left out. For example, CDA is in the process of defining key programs that every AAA will provide, but they don't want to include Long Term Care Ombudsman or HICAP among them, even though every AAA is required to have both.

On Friday of last week, the Trump Administration released the HHS budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026, and it contained great news for the Older Americans Act (OAA) and the Aging Network! In a major turn of events, the Trump Administration has changed their

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plans for how the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) reorganization proposal and how it will administer OAA programs moving forward.

The original proposal, revealed in a leaked FY 2026 budget draft last month, intended to split up the OAA's integral programs across two agencies, sending all but the OAA nutrition programs to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), and zeroing out OAA's Title III D and the Title VII Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs (LTCOP). However, new official documents shared on Friday by the Trump Administration indicated a new plan for OAA programs.

According to [supplemental budget materials](#) officially released by HHS on Friday afternoon, all of its OAA programs and many other aging and disability programs previously administered by the Administration for Community Living (ACL) will move to a newly renamed Administration for Children, Families and Communities (ACFC). OAA programs will not be moved to CMS, and the programs that made up ACL will continue to be housed in ACFC as well. This will allow for continued collaboration between the aging and disability networks and, most importantly, coordination in the delivery of critical services to millions of older adults and caregivers. This is a huge advocacy win!

In the planned reorganization, ACFC will house all OAA programs, except for Title V, which resides at the Department of Labor. The budget provides \$1.9 billion to provide an interconnected foundation of services to support older adults. Almost all OAA programs were level funded at FY 2025 levels, with a significant increase for the Title III E Family Caregiver Support Program. However, the elimination of Americorps (which is the federal body overseeing FGP & SCP) remains.

Locally, our funding remains intact at this time from both the County of Santa Cruz & the County of San Benito. Santa Cruz County sent us a contract for \$131,000 this week, and the San Benito County Board of Supervisors voted to hold all senior programs to their 2024-25 levels (\$31,827 for the AAA) after an initial recommendation for a 3% reduction.



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Tax Counseling Assistance

AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CONNECTION
Navigating the San Benito County Senior & Disability Services Network

Date: June 18, 2025

To: Seniors Council Board of Directors

From: Zachary Johnson, Administrative Services Officer

RE: Proposed Policy on AI Notetakers in Seniors Council Meetings

Recently, staff have observed an increase in the use of “artificial intelligence” (“AI”) or other automated recording/notetaking programs during Seniors Council (and other agencies’) Zoom meetings.

The use of these tools provides some opportunity for increased efficiency; however, concerns about data privacy and participant engagement have led us to consider drafting a policy regulating their use. While the Seniors Council hosts virtual conversations through our Zoom account, notetaker services are activated by the attendee. Because of this, the Seniors Council does not have control or access to the data these services are collecting.

If the notetaker makes mistakes in its transcription, or if the transcript is manipulated by a third party, the Seniors Council could be exposed to a situation in which our discussions are misrepresented to the public. The proposed policy below will minimize our exposure to these for meetings held in digital spaces and safeguard sensitive information.

Recommended to add as III.T:

AI Notetakers will not be allowed to join Advisory Council or Board of Directors meetings in order to protect the confidentiality of participants and to prevent misrepresentation of discussion items. Recordings of these meetings are already privately maintained by Seniors Council staff for administrative purposes only. Moderators will actively remove AI notetakers from these meetings unless it meets the exception criteria below.

Executive Committee recommended addendum: *The only official minutes of any*

10-74

175 Westridge Dr., Watsonville, CA 95076 www.seniorscouncil.org
PHONE: AAA – (831) 688-0400 • FG/SCP – (831) 475-0816 • SCOUT – 1-877-373-8297 • FAX: (831) 688-1225

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meeting convened by the Seniors Council are only those produced and reviewed by Seniors Council staff.

Exceptions to this policy:

Accessibility: We welcome the use of assistive technologies and notetakers for people who require accommodations to fully participate in the experience. Please let us know at contact@seniorscouncil.org if you require the use of assistive technology at any Seniors Council virtual event.

DRAFT

Nancy Fowler

18 May 2025

Seniors Council of Santa Cruz and
175 West Ridge Drive
Watsonville, CA 95076

Re: Use of Simpkins Family Swim Center by Seniors and Others

Dear Members of the Seniors Council:

At the strong suggestion of a physical therapist with whom I have been working the last few months due to a significant loss in mobility, I have now visited the swim center with the intention of doing some exercises, such as pool walking that will help my medical situation. The warm water pool is wonderful, especially with the ability to walk into it. I am not able to use a ladder, or even stairs if they existed. However, my ability to do any exercises at all is hampered by the level of activity in the pool, both when I have been in the pool or just walked in to see how crowded it is. I've been told that, not unexpectedly, it will become even more so during the upcoming months, both because schools will not be in session and due to the number of scheduled swim classes. During my last visit a small group of young men took up most of the deep end of the pool, which would be where pool walking would be possible. Another older woman (I'm 78) left as she could not find any room for the walking, which as she told me "Was the only time she was able to walk without pain". At the same time a number of toddlers were jumping into their mothers' arms from various points around the edge. I fear I am sounding like an old curmudgeon, when in fact I enjoy seeing young-people active and happy, sometimes even sitting in the park to grab a bit of their energy by watching them from my bench.

It is my understanding that in the past there were some scheduled times when seniors and those with mobility issues would have exclusive access to the pool. I would like to suggest that this practice be reinstated, even an hour or two a couple of times a week, and have it advertised so individuals that need this kind of use would be informed of its availability.

Thank you for your consideration and support for this request,

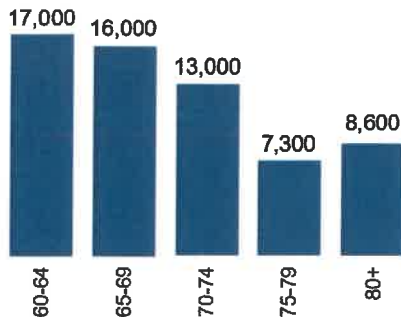
Nancy Fowler

Cc: Jeffrey Gaffney, Director, Santa Cruz County Parks
Kim De Serpa, Supervisor, District 2

11.1-1

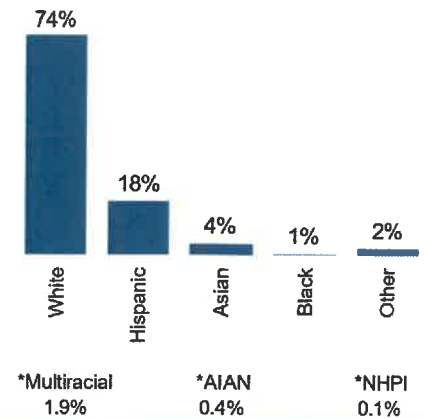
2020 Profile of Older Adults Santa Cruz County

Age Distribution
Adults Age 60+



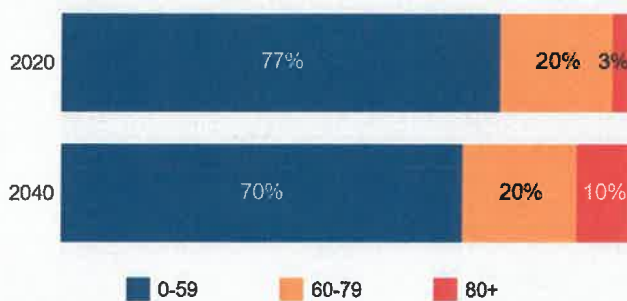
62,000
Adults Age 60+

Race/Ethnicity
Adults Age 60+

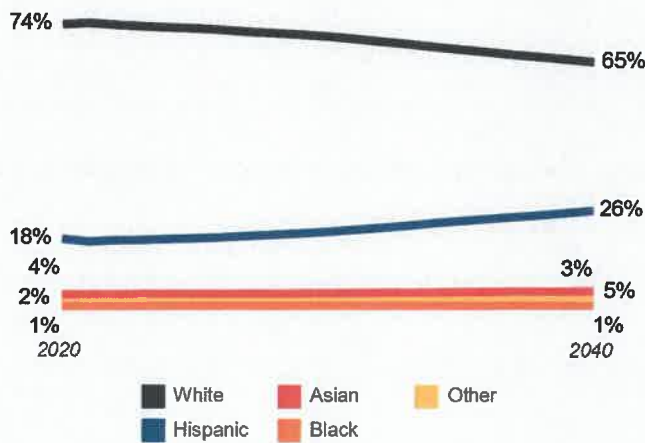


Projected Population Shifts

Population Share



Race/Ethnicity
Adults Age 60+



Social and Economic Needs



11%
of adults age 60+ live in poverty

Below State Average



22%
of adults age 60+ live alone

Near State Average



3%
of adults age 60+ speak English 'not at all'

Below State Average



10%
of adults age 65+ estimated to have Alzheimer's dementia

Near State Average



54%
of low-income households are housing cost burdened

Near State Average



CALIFORNIA LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

**Federal Fiscal Years 2023-24
Annual Advocacy Report**

11.2-2

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our mission

***seek resolution of problems
and advocate for the rights
of residents of long-term
care facilities with the goal of
ensuring their dignity, quality
of life, and quality of care.***



U.2-4



introduction

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman (OSLTCO) Annual Advocacy Report serves to inform the Assistant Secretary of the federal Administration on Aging, the Governor, the California Legislature, the California Department of Public Health, the California Department of Social Services, and the public about the program's achievements over the past year. By presenting key data, best practices, and strategic initiatives, this report highlights how the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program continues to safeguard the health, safety, welfare, and rights of long-term care residents, ultimately enhancing their care and quality of life.

Of special note, just prior to the start of the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) on September 1, 2023, following extensive interagency and interdisciplinary collaboration among federal, state, and local governments, elected officials, and stakeholders – including the San Francisco Long-Term Care Ombudsman team – the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) officially recertified Laguna Honda Hospital on August 16, 2023.

The State Long-Term Care Ombudsman plays a critical role in advocating for policies that enhance the quality of care in skilled nursing and assisted living facilities at both the federal and state levels. In 2024, in collaboration with leading aging and disability advocacy organizations – including Justice in Aging (JiA), Disability Rights California, California Advocates

for Nursing Home Reform (CANHR), the California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association (CLTCOA), and the National Association of State Ombudsman Programs (NASOP) – OSLTCO submitted recommendations to CMS and the Administration for Community Living (ACL) to strengthen federal regulations and ensure residents' rights remain a priority.

As part of this advocacy, OSLTCO provided input on the first-ever CMS proposed rule for Minimum Staffing Standards for Nursing Homes. The final regulations, published in April 2024, mandate that all skilled nursing facilities have a registered nurse on staff 24/7 – a requirement not currently in place in California.

OSLTCO also submitted comments to the Administration for Community Living (ACL) on proposed updates to modernize the federal Older Americans Act (OAA). The final rule, published in February 2024, strengthens the authority of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, ensuring OSLTCO can continue advocating for residents without unnecessary barriers. Additionally, California provided input on ACL's first regulations for Adult Protective Services. The final regulations were released in May 2024. The California Department of Social Services' Adult Protective Services program is the lead agency responsible for implementing these new standards.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman representatives remain committed to amplifying residents' voices and advocating for their rights. While federal and state-level efforts drive systemic change, the most impactful work occurs at the community level, where local Ombudsman programs provide direct support to residents. The Federal Fiscal Year 2023-24 Annual Advocacy Report highlights the dedication of over 600 LTC Ombudsman staff and volunteers who empower residents and their families to exercise their rights every day.



what we accomplished

During 2023 and 2024, the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman program focused heavily on policy advocacy, rolling out an updated quality review process and expanding support to recruitment and training efforts. Below are some examples of key initiatives and actions taken by OSLTCO on behalf of residents and local long-term care ombudsman programs during the reporting period.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Activities in FFY 2023

574 Community Education Sessions

195 Surveys Completed

68,562 Facility Visits

94,657 Instances of Information and Assistance Provided to Individuals

22,684 Instances of Information and Assistance Provided to Facility Staff

43,820 Complaints Investigated

52% Complaint Resolution Rate
(percentage of complaints resolved partially or completely to the satisfaction of the resident)

2,319 Resident Council Meetings Supported

174 Family Council Meetings Supported

175 Facility Staff Trainings

23,511 CRISISline Calls Received

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Activities in FFY 2024

751 Community Education Sessions

288 Surveys Completed

69,645 Facility Visits

84,167 Instances of Information and Assistance Provided to Individuals

34,282 Instances of Information and Assistance Provided to Facility Staff

34,864 Complaints Investigated

54% Complaint Resolution Rate
(percentage of complaints resolved partially or completely to the satisfaction of the resident)

2,924 Resident Council Meetings Supported

213 Family Council Meetings Supported

275 Facility Staff Trainings

21,724 CRISISline Calls Received

state level advocacy

California's Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman (OSLTCO), the statewide network of LTC Ombudsman programs and resident advocates joined together to actively support needed state and federal efforts to improve the quality of care provided to long-term care residents. OSLTCO shared program data, testified, and submitted letters in support of or in opposition to impactful legislation proposed during the two-year session. OSLTCO also submitted comments to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and Administration for Community Living (ACL). Here are the key initiatives in 2023 and 2024 and the actions OSLTCO took on behalf of residents and local long-term care programs.

STATE AGENCY COORDINATION

OSLTCO invested significant time and effort during this reporting period to strengthen collaboration with key state agency partners with influence over long-term care facility operations and resident care. Partnerships were formalized with the signing of no fewer than five memoranda of understanding between the OSLTCO and agency partners. These included formal MOUs with the California Department of Public Health; Department of Justice, Medical Fraud and Elder Abuse Division; Department of Developmental Services; Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; and the first-ever MOU with Adult Protective Services. Ombudsman representatives also participated in the first Adult Protective Services' Multi-Disciplinary Team Conference. At the time of writing, OSLTCO is currently revisiting a three-year MOU with the Department of Social Services.



OSLTCO, the statewide network of LTC Ombudsman programs, and resident advocates focused their advocacy efforts on multiple legislative initiatives during the 2023-24 legislative session. As a result of these efforts, several notable outcomes were achieved that promise to protect and expand residents' rights and strengthen the state's long-term care system. The following is a summary of key initiatives the OSLTCO advocated for and against during the recent session:

[Senate Bill 1354 \(Wahab\)](#) - Passed: Chapter 339, Statutes of 2024

Payment Source Discrimination

This law mandates that long-term health care providers participating in the Medi-Cal program deliver aid, care, services, and benefits to Medi-Cal beneficiaries in the same manner with the same methods, quality, and level as those provided to all residents regardless of payment source. OSLTCO co-sponsored the bill and testified on the challenges of placing long-term, low-income residents in skilled nursing facilities. Governor Newsom signed it into law.

[Senate Bill 1406 \(Allen\)](#) - Passed: Chapter 340, Statutes of 2024

Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly: Resident Services

This law grants RCFE residents the right to request, refuse, or discontinue services and requires facilities to provide written notice of rate increases at least 90 days in advance, including reasons for the adjustment. Supported by OSLTCO, the bill was passed and signed into law by Governor Newsom.

[Senate Bill 1249 \(Roth\)](#) - Passed: Chapter 337, Statutes of 2024

Revisions to the Older Californians Act

This law authorizes the California Department of Aging to enter into contracts and allows counties to petition for control of local Area Agencies on Aging when they cannot effectively provide Ombudsman services. Supported by OSLTCO, the bill was passed and signed into law by the Governor.

[Assembly Bill 2075 \(Alvarez\)](#) - Defeated

Resident-Designated Support Persons Act

This bill would have provided a resident of a long-term care facility with the right to personal, on-site access to a designated support person or health and social service provider during a public health emergency in which the resident's visitation rights are restricted by state or local order.

This bill was cosponsored by OSLTCO and, despite early broad-based support in committees, was defeated in the Senate. OSLTCO is committed to revisiting this issue in the upcoming legislative session and has identified a potential legislative sponsor.

[Assembly Bill 1911 \(Reyes\)](#) - Defeated

Resident Complaints

AB 1911 proposed reforms to complaint procedures for residential care facilities for the elderly (RCFEs), requiring CDSS to conduct on-site investigations within one business day for complaints alleging imminent danger and to notify complainants within 10 days if an investigation were deemed unnecessary. The bill was ultimately defeated due to concerns over CDSS's capacity to meet these requirements with existing staff resources.

Legislation Opposed by OSLTCO

[Senate Bill 875 \(Glazer\)](#) - Defeated

Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly: Referral Agencies

This bill sought to bring referral agencies under the CDSS licensing framework. OSLTCO opposed it due to insufficient disclosure requirements and financial incentives that could lead to inappropriate nursing home placements. Despite strong industry lobbying, OSLTCO and residents' rights advocates successfully highlighted the bill's flaws, leading to its defeat. OSLTCO plans to pursue revised legislation next year.

amplifying voices

SNF/ICF

Long-Term Care Ombudsman representatives visit all skilled nursing facilities (SNF), intermediate care facilities (ICF), residential care facilities for the elderly (RCFE), and residential care centers (RCC) on a regular, quarterly basis. These visits are part of routine monitoring and not in response to a specific resident complaint.

1,189
facilities **115,944**
beds

RCFE/RCC

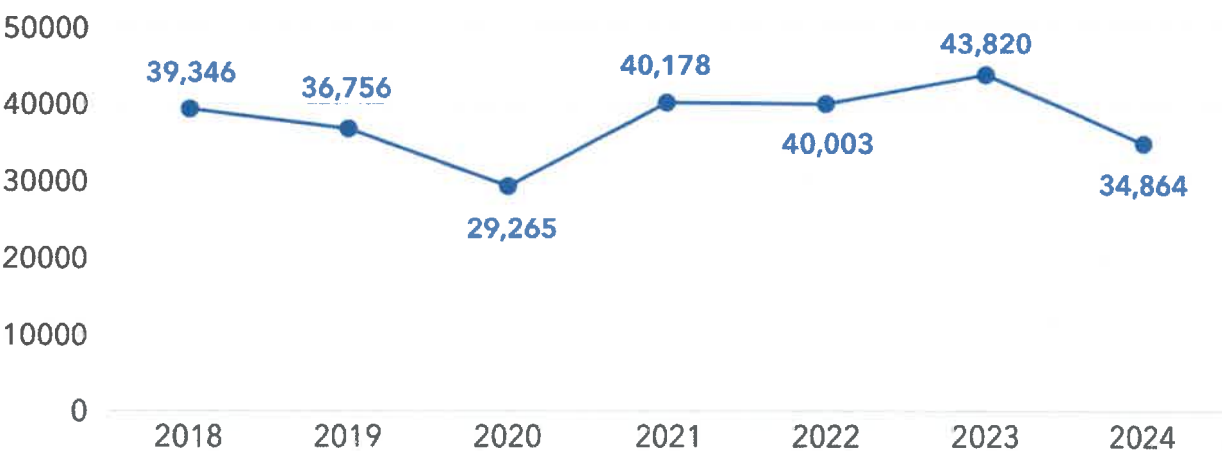
7,798
facilities **206,274**
beds

Adult residential facilities (ARF) and other facilities such as Intermediate Care Facilities for the Developmentally Disabled and Adult Day programs are visited by Ombudsman representatives in response to complaints of possible physical abuse.

ARF

5,853
facilities **39,519**
beds

The Ombudsman Program saw a 20% decrease in the number of complaints over the previous year. This decrease is partially attributable to program guidance provided by the OSLTCO as well as training efforts focused on properly documenting abuse reports received from mandated reporters. Complementary to this effort is the development of a feature within the program’s data management system enabling the capture of these reports as assignments to be investigated prior to opening a case. As a result of these efforts, the overall number of cases opened, and cases withdrawn, declined over the reporting period.



11.2-11

Top 5 Complaints in FFY 2023, All Facility Types

Rank	Complaint Description	Complaints of this Type	% of all Complaints
1	Abuse, Gross Neglect, Exploitation - Abuse: physical	5,835	13%
2	Care - Symptoms unattended	3,045	7%
3	Admission, Transfer, Discharge, Eviction - Discharge or eviction	2,386	5%
4	Abuse, Gross Neglect, Exploitation - Gross neglect	2,327	5%
5	Care - Medications	1,983	5%

Top 5 Complaints in FFY 2024, All Facility Types

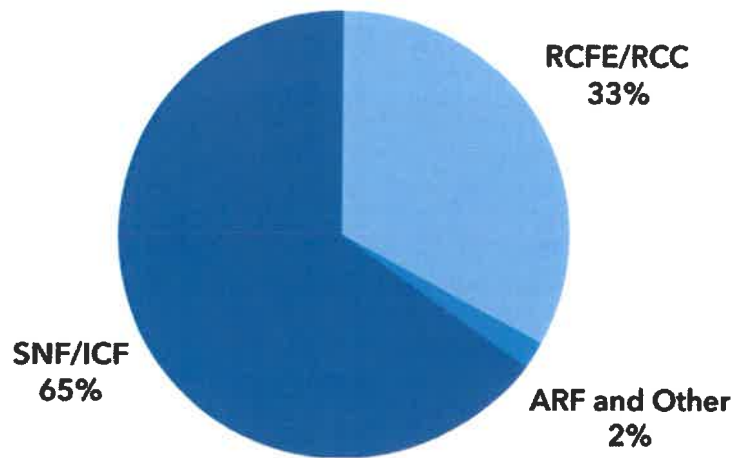
Rank	Complaint Description	Complaints of this Type	% of all Complaints
1	Abuse, Gross Neglect, Exploitation - Abuse: physical	4,848	13.9%
2	Care - Symptoms unattended	2,490	7.1%
3	Abuse, Gross Neglect, Exploitation - Care Planning	2,228	6.4%
4	Admission, Transfer, Discharge, Eviction - Discharge or eviction	2,159	6.2%
5	Abuse, Gross Neglect, Exploitation - Gross Neglect	1,983	5.7%

11.2-12

Total Complaints by Facility Type

Facility	2023	2024
SNF/ICF	29,186	22,915
RCFE/RCC	14,031	11,499
Other	603	450
Total	43,820	34,864

Total Complaints by Facility Type FFY 2024



OSLTCO FUNDING AND STRUCTURE

Staffing and Volunteers in FFY 2023

265 Paid Full- and Part-Time Staff

360 Trained Volunteers

Staffing and Volunteers in FFY 2024

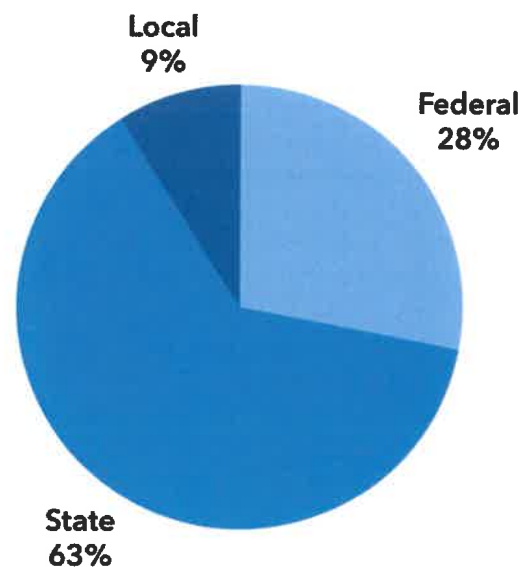
252 Paid Full- and Part-Time Staff

364 Trained Volunteers

Program Expenditures

Source	2023	2024
Federal	\$5,310,220	\$5,716,986
State	\$13,877,574	\$12,913,338
Local	\$1,948,695	\$1,826,755
Total	\$21,136,489	\$20,457,080

Program Expenditures FFY 2024



addressing unanswered call lights

A RESIDENTS RIGHTS ISSUE

When individuals enter a long-term care (LTC) facility in California, such as a nursing home, following a stroke, major surgery, or injury requiring rehabilitation, they retain their individual rights.

Nursing homes, licensed by the California Department of Public Health as Skilled Nursing Facilities or SNFs, provide 24-hour supervision, three daily meals, and assistance with daily activities. They also offer rehabilitation services, including physical, occupational, and speech therapy. One of the most common complaints from nursing home residents is unresponsive staff. Residents have reported waiting hours for assistance with basic needs. Federal and state regulations, including California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 71661, mandate that nursing homes maintain functional call systems to ensure prompt responses. These systems must provide visible and audible signals, with indicators at nurses' stations and in hallways. Calls must be reset at the originating station unless the system includes two-way communication.

Both federal and state laws emphasize that LTC residents must receive care, supervision, and services tailored to their needs. However, many residents report being neglected, with requests for assistance or medical care ignored. In 2023, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program received over 6,000 complaints about unattended symptoms and 3,100 complaints about ignored or denied assistance requests. These numbers declined in 2024. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program in 2024 received more than 950 complaints about unattended symptoms and 2,490 complaints about ignored or denied assistance requests.

A facility's commitment to residents' rights is reflected in how staff respond to call lights. These call buttons, located at each resident's bedside, serve as a vital lifeline, especially for individuals who are unable to transfer independently. Failure to respond promptly violates residents' rights and raises concerns about overall care quality. Unanswered call lights may signal broader systemic issues, such as high staff turnover, inadequate training, or poor supervision.

Addressing call light responsiveness must be a priority for LTC facility management. Consistently monitoring response times ensures high-quality care and reinforces a commitment to residents' rights and well-being.

residents' rights

Certified Long-Term Care Ombudsman representatives help residents, their families, and their friends understand and exercise rights guaranteed by federal and state laws and regulations.

RESIDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:



Be treated with dignity and respect.



Send and receive personal mail.



Be free from chemical and physical restraints.



Have personal and medical records kept confidential.



Manage their own finances.



Apply for state and federal assistance without discrimination.



Voice grievances without fear of retaliation.



Be fully informed of available services and any charges for those services prior to admission.



Associate and communicate privately with any person of their choice.



Be given advance notice of plans to transfer or discharge them.

best practices

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

In its first year running [San Bernardino County's Long-Term Care Ombudsman](#) (LTCO) Program, WISE & Healthy Aging managed to close 78% more cases – an impressive increase in any industry.

"I'm really passionate about giving voice to those who are voiceless," says Ombudsman Program director Tabatha Sebastian, whose leadership helped accomplish that. "This population is vulnerable to exploitation and we're here to make sure their rights are being upheld. Just because they're in a facility doesn't mean they lose their choices."

When WISE & Healthy Aging started providing ombudsman services in April 2022, about 2% of skilled nursing facilities were providing the LTCO office with copies of transfer discharge notices issued to long-term care residents 30 days before their moves, as required by law. Tabatha's staff mailed each facility two notices, and compliance increased to 25%. So they required that facilities sign an acknowledgement of the rules, she recalls.

"I'm happy to say that 99% are now notifying us properly," she says with a smile.

The WISE team also launched a series of public education campaigns digitally and in print, alerting the community that they're ready and available to help. Advertisements drive readers to [WISE & Healthy Aging's website](#), which has information on residents' rights plus a handy [facility locator](#) to help older adults, people with disabilities, and their families find the facility that's right for their needs. Another innovation: hiring Master of Social Work interns, adding three eager and valuable student workers to Tabatha's staff of five and allowing the office to cover more ground. The office is now about a year ahead of expectations, says Molly Davies, president and CEO of WISE & Healthy Aging, a nonprofit that also manages Los Angeles County's LTCO program.

Molly says, "They're doing a phenomenal job across the board."



contact the ombudsman

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman operates a statewide 24-hour toll-free CRISISline to receive complaints and relay requests for local Long-Term Care Ombudsman services. These services are free and confidential, and interpreter services are available.

In California, every skilled nursing facility and residential care facility for the elderly, including board and care homes and assisted living facilities, is required to display one or more current posters with the CRISISline phone number. Each poster also includes the name, address, and phone number of the nearest Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. Posters are provided at no cost to long-term care facilities.

11.2-17



24-Hour CRISISline
(800) 231-4024

For hard of hearing callers:
(800) 735-2929
(800) 735-2922



24-Hour CRISISline

(800) 231-4024

For hard of hearing callers:

(800) 735-2929

(800) 735-2922

Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

2880 Gateway Oaks, Suite 200

Sacramento, California 95833

Phone: (916) 419-7510

Fax: (916) 928-2503

stateomb@aging.ca.gov



aging.ca.gov

11.2-18

NEWS RELEASE

Martha's Kitchen named 2025 California Nonprofit of the Year for Assembly District 29

Organization has provided hundreds of thousands of meals annually through its prepared meal and grocery distribution programs.

by **BenitoLink Staff**
April 30, 2025



Photo provided by Bill Lee.

Information provided by Martha's Kitchen. Lea este artículo en español [aquí](#).

Martha's Kitchen is proud to announce it has been named the 2025 California Nonprofit of the Year for Assembly District 29, an honor that celebrates over four decades of life-changing impact across our region. Selected by the Office of Speaker Robert Rivas and the California Association of Nonprofits, this recognition underscores Martha's Kitchen's unwavering commitment to fighting hunger with dignity, compassion, and community-rooted solutions.

"This award belongs to every volunteer, partner, and supporter who has stood with us in the fight against hunger. Together, we are writing the story of a food secure future, one meal at a time" – Bill Lee, Executive Director – Martha's Kitchen.

Since expanding into San Benito County more than six years ago, Martha's Kitchen has provided hundreds of thousands of meals annually through our prepared meal and grocery distribution programs. Through trusted partnerships with organizations like The Salvation Army, My Father's House, the HOME Resource Center, and many others, we ensure meals reach those who need them most, meeting people where they are, with dignity, compassion, and care. In 2025, we're on pace to provide 2.5 million nourishing meals to families, seniors, and individuals facing urgent need across the regions we serve.

A New Chapter – Meals on Wheels for San Benito County

Looking ahead, Martha's Kitchen is preparing to launch a Meals on Wheels program to serve the most vulnerable and homebound seniors across San Benito County. This initiative will deliver nutritious meals, along with connection and care, directly to seniors' doorsteps daily, while also continuing our weekly congregate dining program in both San Juan Bautista and Hollister.

11.3-2

Saving AmeriCorps: What's at Stake and Why We Must Act Now



Hillary Kane
May 1, 2025



Image Credit: Photo by [Elissa Garcia](#) on [Unsplash](#)

AmeriCorps, an independent federal agency with a [\\$1 billion budget](#) that [places over 200,000](#) people in intensive service roles each year, typically with host nonprofits, was formally established in 1993. For 30 years, it was a firmly bipartisan program. While it was officially launched under President Bill Clinton, a Democrat, it built heavily on the [1990 National and Community Service Act](#), a program supported by then-President George H. W. Bush, a Republican.

The nonprofit I direct, the [Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development](#) is a group of more than two dozen colleges and universities in the greater Philadelphia area that support community-based service-learning partnerships. Our full-time AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) members, whose service supports anti-poverty efforts, earn \$957 biweekly (before taxes) and a \$7,395 education award that can be used to pay for college tuition or pay back student loans.

On Friday, April 25, grantees nationwide were told via email that their programs were terminated, effective immediately—a move that eliminated about 41 percent of the agency's grant funding.

Now much of this work is at risk. When the so-called Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) came calling we all knew something terrible would come from this; it was only a matter of time. On April 8, it [announced initial restructuring plans](#) to cut AmeriCorps' workforce by "up to 50 percent or more." A few days later, agency staff were offered [deferred resignations](#)—advocates estimate that at least about a third of the staff (200 of roughly 700) took the offer.

On [April 16](#), most remaining staff were put on indefinite administrative leave. On Friday, April 25, grantees nationwide were told via email that their [programs were terminated](#), effective immediately—a move that eliminated about 41 percent of the agency’s grant funding—because that funding “no longer effectuates agency priorities.” The agency is now estimated to be operating at about [15 percent of its original capacity](#).

On April 29, 24 states and the District of Columbia [filed a lawsuit challenging these cuts](#). In the meantime, we are mobilizing our supporters, as well as doing our best to keep the programs we operate intact and support the people affected by the cuts.

What the Cuts Mean to Our Nonprofit

Our nonprofit is better off than some others affected by AmeriCorps cuts. At least so far, our internal VISTA Fellows program was *not* cut and continues as normal, however, we have suffered cuts to two other programs. The cuts to AmeriCorps programming in Philadelphia and nationwide are devastating.

Here’s what DOGE cuts mean to us:

- We won’t be hiring 15 low-income recent high school graduates into summer-only AmeriCorps positions and providing them with a one-week pre-college boot camp. As a result, there will be 15 fewer staff supporting summer programming for younger students.
- We won’t be hiring 30 high school students into paid summer internships, which provides them with much-needed work experience and financial support.
- About 170 high school students in West Philadelphia will stop getting one-on-one coaching and support for post-secondary readiness.
- Fifteen low-income first-generation college freshmen will lose their near-peer mentors.
- Seven members receiving stipends will end their service on Friday, May 2, and will only receive prorated education awards. They will no longer receive their living stipends or program-provided health insurance.

AmeriCorps members will be left to fend for themselves because they do not qualify for unemployment, although fortunately in Philadelphia there is a locally funded citywide [AmeriCorps Emergency Fund and Support Services](#) that provides one-time financial grants to members who are experiencing unexpected financial difficulties. It wasn’t designed to be an unemployment fund, but it may be able to provide some former AmeriCorps members with limited support.

Why Does AmeriCorps Matter?

In the Philadelphia region alone, hundreds of nonprofit organizations rely on AmeriCorps volunteers, whether directly or indirectly. AmeriCorps has been around for over a generation and has some very specific rules and structures. Thus, there is a whole group of nonprofits that were designed around AmeriCorps itself—think [City Year](#), [College Possible](#), or [Teach for America](#).

There is another group of nonprofits that rely primarily on volunteer labor to meet their missions. AmeriCorps members are often the backbone of those agencies. The fact that AmeriCorps members receive stipends and are committed for a specific term provides organizations with greater stability than they have with typical volunteers. Thousands of organizations have been touched by AmeriCorps through individual members placed in their communities. Our VISTA program alone has placed over 200 members in as many organizations in the Philadelphia region over our 12-year history.

**In the Philadelphia region alone,
hundreds of nonprofit organizations
rely on AmeriCorps volunteers,
whether directly or indirectly.**

11.4-2

Less recognized is the role AmeriCorps plays in developing the future talent pool for the nonprofit and government sectors. My LinkedIn feed is full of mid-career professionals and leaders talking about how AmeriCorps gave them their start.

We always joke that in AmeriCorps the pay is terrible, but the experience can be transformative. Grassroots nonprofits, which often can't afford to pay seasoned professionals, rely on AmeriCorps members to manage new projects or initiatives. As a result, those members get incredible experience and are often handed responsibilities they wouldn't otherwise get as entry-level professionals.

By acting in solidarity, we can work to both defend nonprofits and support the next generation of civil society leadership.

What Can We Do?

Honestly, it's hard to know what can be done. Many of us have seen the writing on the wall since the November 2024 election and certainly since the inauguration of President Donald Trump.

Of course, we are hopeful the lawsuit filed on April 29 will be effective in restoring programs and AmeriCorps staff jobs.

In the meantime, AmeriCorps program directors are engaged in outreach and advocacy. In Pennsylvania, we have met with members of Congress and both of our state's US Senators, one of whom is an AmeriCorps alumnus. Most lawmakers claim to have their hands tied or at least say that they have little influence on the Trump administration's actions.

That said, other federal cuts have been reversed with enough public pressure. Voices for National Service, one of the major AmeriCorps advocacy organizations, has an [online tool](#) to make it easy to contact your elected officials. And many of you reading this might be AmeriCorps alumni. If so, [share your story](#)!

Finally, connect with your AmeriCorps programs in your area. Offer support to their members, whether still in service or recently demobilized. Offer jobs or career counseling. By acting in solidarity, we can work to both defend nonprofits and support the next generation of civil society leadership.

About the author



Hillary Kane

Hillary Kane is the director for the Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighbor...

11.4-3

NONPROFITS

Venerable seniors organization seeks way forward

Jovenes de Antano lost two major contracts but plans to continue offering services.

by **Noe Magaña**
May 22, 2025



Seniors enjoying lunch at the community center on March 11. Photo by Noe Magaña.

lea este artículo en español [aquí](#).

Having lost its two major funding sources, Jovenes De Antano is at a crossroads after decades of service to Hollister's senior community.

At the May 19 Hollister City Council meeting, Jovenes executive director Danny Barrera Jr. and a group of seniors shared their concerns regarding the organization's future after it lost its food service contract and transportation funding.

11.5-2

Barrera said the city had given them notice to vacate their space at the Pauline Valdivia Memorial Community Center by June 30. He pleaded with the council for more time to find a new location.

But a Jovenes board member contradicted Barrera and said the organization aims to continue operating out of the Community Center location and providing some services for seniors in San Benito County.

City Manager David Mirrione said the council discussed a potential community center lease with the organization in closed session following the public portion of the May 19 meeting.

Jovenes De Antano was the service provider for meals and transportation for seniors but recently lost its bid for funding. Jovenes board member Tami Cook-Erickson said the organization will transition from a government-funded nonprofit to relying on private donors.

She said a transition of service providers will occur July 1, when Martha's Kitchen takes over operations. The meals will continue to be served at Valdivia Memorial Community Center, she said.

"The elderly community members that utilize both the congregate dining and the Meals on Wheels will not have a disruption of food services to them," she said.

Martha's Kitchen Executive Director Bill Lee said he is attempting to secure a lease at the Community Center. He declined to comment on the transition process and confusion about services expressed by clients at the May 19 Hollister City Council meeting.

Cook-Erickson said the boards of both nonprofits are in direct communication to make sure "nothing falls through" and to work on transitioning some Jovenes De Antano staff to Martha's Kitchen.

The Seniors Council of Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties awarded the contract to San Jose-based Martha's Kitchen for the meals services.

Jovenes also lost a competitive grant for transportation services to Illinois-based Transdev Services, Inc. Jovenes had been the grantee of those multiyear funds until now.

Cook-Erickson said Jovenes is in lease negotiations with the city of Hollister for space at the Community Center, which the organization has been occupying rent-free for more than 30 years in exchange for the services it provides to seniors.

Mirrione said at the May 19 City Council meeting that the city has provided the space for Jovenes since 1989 and that the organization has not been charged for utilities.

Cook-Erickson said Jovenes' goal is to continue to provide social events for the seniors such as loteria (Mexican bingo), bingo and tax assistance days. She said the organization is also looking to add art and computer classes.

"It's going to be a community center that has multiple nonprofits in it that take care of our seniors," she said. "So actually as much as there is confusion and distress, it's going to be a better partnership moving forward as we bring more services to our seniors in that location."

At the council meeting, many seniors spoke in support of the 50-year-old Jovenes De Antano and the services it has provided over the years.

Cook-Erickson said Jovenes will continue to provide services through June 30 and that confusion has likely arisen because of the emotional nature of the services.

"It's unfortunate that these changes are causing a little bit of duress but we will get through this and we will serve our seniors as we always have, with them as the No. 1 priority," she said. "They will be the No. 1 priority for Martha's Kitchen also."

For questions about services, residents can call Jovenes at 831-637-9275, Martha's Kitchen at 408-293-6111, or Seniors Council at 831-688-0400.

Related BenitoLink articles

Jovenes De Antaño seeking community support amid funding uncertainty

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11.5-4



Senior Council sees major cuts

Companion Programs are targeted for elimination

BY TARMO HANNULA - May 23, 2025

Proposed budget cuts by the Republican-led administration in Washington, D.C. could be bad news for local seniors, with a plan to eliminate Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs, a program of the Seniors Council in Santa Cruz County.

Clay Kempf, executive director of the Watsonville-based Senior Council, said the move is daunting to programs that serve older adults.

"While other serious cuts to seniors are also of great concern, the proposed elimination of our Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs are especially devastating," he said.

Kempf said the two programs became part of the Senior Council about 32 years ago.

The program recruits low-income seniors who visit local schools to mentor and tutor students who are struggling academically and socially, grades K-3. The volunteer program has been around for more than five decades, with more than 1 million seniors mentoring millions of kids in all 50 states.

Senior Companion similarly allows low-income seniors to help other seniors.

Kempf said the volunteers typically run errands, help with socialization, and "even a drive around the neighborhood, or just a friendly visit," he said.

President Donald Trump recently laid off over 80 percent of staff that oversees all of AmeriCorps, a federal service program that recruits volunteers for a wide range of projects nationwide, in areas that include education, health and disaster relief.

"Then a judge came out and said that the layoffs of AmeriCorps staff were illegal," Kempf said.

According to a 2020 study by the [Inner City Fund](#), some 275,000 Americans were serving their communities that year through AmeriCorps and Senior Corps.

This includes projects such as helping communities respond to and recover from natural disasters, fighting the opioid epidemic, connecting veterans to job and education resources, supporting independent living for seniors and Americans with disabilities and helping families achieve economic self-sufficiency.

11.6-1

At the Senior Council, around 150 volunteers typically put in around 15-20 hours a week each in helping two to three students in the program.

"The question people need to ask is, 'why this is being done?'" Kempf said of the proposed cuts. "There is no financial reason, no logical reason. We need to call the White House and your elected representatives. In my 25-plus years, I've never seen anything like this. I don't know why it's happening."

TARMO HANNULA

Tarmo Hannula has been the lead photographer with The Pajaronian newspaper in Watsonville since 1997. More recently Good Times & Press Banner. He also reports on a wide range of topics, including police, fire, environment, schools, the arts and events. A fifth generation Californian, Tarmo was born in the Mother Lode of the Sierra (Columbia) and has lived in Santa Cruz County since the late 1970s. He earned a BA from UC Santa Cruz and has traveled to 33 countries.

11.6-2