

Justice in Aging's 2023 California Legislative and Budget Priorities

MARCH 2023

For 2023, Justice in Aging has prioritized these key legislative and budget proposals. These proposals span our issue areas of health and long-term care, housing, economic security, and elder justice, and advance several of the goals of the Master Plan for Aging.

As the state with the highest number of seniors living in poverty, and because California often leads the nation in innovative, progressive policies, our work to advance the needs of low-income older adults in California improves the lives of millions, and can serve as a model for other states.

HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE

SB 311 (Eggman)

- This bill would require the Department of Health Care Services to submit a State Plan Amendment to become a Medicare Part A Buy-In State. This shift would eliminate enrollment barriers that some low-income older adults face in getting financial assistance for high Medicare Part A monthly premiums. This proposal also has the potential for cost-savings, due to the availability of federal funds.
- Sponsored by Justice in Aging

Increase the Home Upkeep Allowance

- This budget request would increase the Home Upkeep Allowance to 138% Federal Poverty Level to prevent the loss of housing and permanent institutionalization of older adults and persons with disabilities who would otherwise be able to return to the community and live in their own homes. Current policy allows low-income Californians who need six months or less of long-term care to set aside only \$209 a month to keep their housing while they receive care in a facility. Because that amount is a fraction of actual housing costs, many individuals who would otherwise be able to return home become homeless and are unable to leave nursing home facilities.
- Co-Championed by Justice in Aging, California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform, and Disability Rights California

HOUSING

SB 37 (Caballero)

- This bill would create a targeted rental subsidy program that would enable thousands of older adults and people with disabilities annually to access or keep their housing, and stem the

growing tide of homelessness among older adults. The subsidies would be made available to severely low-income Californians who are experiencing homelessness or at imminent risk of homelessness.

- Justice in Aging is co-sponsoring with Corporation for Supportive Housing, Leading Age California, California State Council on Developmental Disabilities, and United Way of Greater Los Angeles
- Includes an accompanying 2023-24 budget proposal to create a 4-year program.

ECONOMIC SECURITY

Increase State Supplementary Payment (SSP)

- This budget proposal championed by the Californians for SSI coalition would make critical investments to ensure that older adults who rely on SSI, and people with disabilities, do not struggle with the toxic stress of poverty and have the economic security to live in safe environments.
 - Appropriate a three-step increase to bring the SSI/SSP grants to 100% of the federal poverty level over three years, which would require \$209 million each year, over the next three years and \$418 million ongoing.
 - Appropriate \$8.288 million to update Supplemental Nutrition Benefit (SNB) and Transitional Nutrition Benefit (TNB) allotments to have parity with adjustments made in CalFresh.
 - Revive the Special Circumstances Program: Appropriate \$10 million to support vulnerable populations facing emergencies.

ELDER JUSTICE

SB 278 (Dodd)

- This bill would clarify existing elder financial exploitation laws to ensure that older adult victims of financial scams can hold banks and other entities accountable for assisting in their financial exploitation.
- Courts have interpreted current law to require banks had “actual knowledge” of the underlying financial abuse. This bill would remedy this, allowing claimants more ease in bringing claims
- Co-sponsored by Consumer Attorneys of California, California Low Income Consumer Coalition and Elder Law & Advocacy-San Diego

Please contact [Yasmin Peled, Senior Policy Advocate](#), with any questions on these proposals: ypeled@justiceinaging.org.