

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY

Subject

Legislative Policy: Issues Affecting Older Adults

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Purpose

To establish the Board of Supervisors' legislative policy regarding issues affecting the well-being of older adults and to provide guidance to the County's legislative representatives when advocating the County's interests to legislators, other elected officials and policy makers.

Background

The Older Americans Act became law in 1965. It established a series of broad policy objectives designed to meet the needs of older adults. In 1973, Congress expanded the scope of activities to include nutrition programs and area agencies on aging. The Act mandated the establishment of Advisory Councils to advise area agencies on aging regarding all matters relating to the development and administration of the area plan.

Older adults, by means of the Advisory Council to Aging & Independence Services, have shared their wisdom and have provided guidance to the County on many issues affecting older adults. The Aging & Independence Services Advisory Council's primary responsibility is to advise Aging & Independence Services on the development and implementation of the Area Plan on Aging. The Board of Supervisors adopted the Area Plan for 2012-2016 on July 5, 2012, which identifies the priorities and direction for County activities on behalf of older adults.

Since 1973, the County of San Diego has responded to the concerns of older adults by establishing programs to provide better support for consumers. A number of County services were added to Aging & Independence Services for an improved system of care. These services expanded the role of Aging & Independence Services beyond older adults to also include persons with disabilities.

Policy

The legislative policy of the Board of Supervisors regarding issues affecting older adults and persons with disabilities is to:

1. Support legislation that would help seniors and persons with disabilities maintain, strengthen, and safeguard their independence and enhance their involvement in the community through a range of life options and other appropriate services including support, employment and social interaction programs.

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2. Support legislation that would ensure the rights of seniors and persons with disabilities to obtain protective and legal services through information, advocacy and adult protective programs.
3. Support legislation that would enhance the quality of life for seniors and persons with disabilities, including those with special needs, through support, employment, and social interaction programs that are responsive to individual requirements.
4. Support legislation that fosters intergenerational collaboration on public policy and programs to improve the lives of children, youth, seniors and persons with disabilities thus strengthening the community overall.
5. Support legislation that would establish a comprehensive and coordinated system and provide options for long term care activities that will secure and maintain maximum independence and dignity in a home environment, remove individual and social barriers to economic and personal independence, and provide a continuum of care for vulnerable seniors.
6. Support legislation that would provide maximum local control of programs that serve seniors and persons with disabilities.
7. Support legislation that would provide adequate funding for mandated programs for seniors and persons with disabilities, including state-only funded programs and programs authorized under the Older Americans Act.
8. Support legislation that includes a return to full funding for Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) programs and increases the SSBG allocation to keep up with inflation and population growth.
9. Support legislation that restores adequate and full funding for the Adult Protective Services Program.
10. Support legislation that would increase base funding of the Ombudsman Program.
11. Support legislation that provides adequate and full funding for programs authorized under the Older Americans Act, with consideration given to caseload growth, cost-of-living adjustments and equitable distribution of funds to those areas with large senior populations.
12. Support legislation that would remove barriers for seniors wishing to continue employment; including support for training or re-training of seniors for the current workforce, and remove obstacles that penalize continued working such as impacts to pensions and benefits like Medicare, disability and life insurance to allow a phased retirement.
13. Support legislation to fully fund mandated investigations of reports of abuse/neglect in various facilities by Long-Term Care Ombudsmen.
14. Support legislation that would provide a comprehensive response to elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.

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15. Support legislation that would promote the psychological, social, and physical, well-being of seniors and persons with disabilities, through the expansion of mental health services and health-related programs, including nutrition, physical fitness, prevention and rehabilitation, which is cost-effective and responsive to demonstrated needs.
16. Support legislation that would promote the economic well-being of older adults and persons with disabilities.
17. Support legislation that would provide exemptions, in grant calculations for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and other benefit programs, for stipends received by seniors and persons with disabilities for participating in volunteer opportunities in the community.

In Home Supportive Services (IHSS)

18. Support legislation that would transfer full financial responsibility for the County's share of IHSS to the State.
19. Support legislation that would increase or transfer full funding of the employer of record costs for the IHSS Program to the State.
20. Oppose legislation that would transfer financial responsibility to the County or reduce State participation in the IHSS Program.
21. Oppose legislation that would increase costs to the County for the IHSS program.
22. Oppose legislation that would shift costs to the County for the IHSS program.
23. Oppose legislation that would increase County workload for the IHSS program.
24. Support legislation that would allow the Department of Justice to perform criminal records checks using the FBI nation-wide search process for IHSS home care providers of vulnerable populations, including IHSS recipients.

Responsible Departments

Chief Administrative Office
Office of Strategy and Intergovernmental Affairs

Sunset Date

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12-31-20.

References

Board Action 4/23/85 (24)
Board Action 5/5/87 (56)

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Board Action 1/29/91 (78)
Board Action 4/13/99 (42A)
Board Action 1/13/04 (13)
Board Action 12/11/07 (14)
Board Action 12/09/08 (33)
Board Action 11/05/13 (19)