



April 16, 2025

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

## RE: Support for Continued Leadership on Aging, Disability, and Alzheimer's in the Governor's Office

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, I write to express our strong support for continued leadership and visibility on aging, disability, and Alzheimer's issues at the highest levels of state government - and to respectfully encourage the

administration to fill the role of the Governor's Senior Advisor on Aging, Disability, and Alzheimer's following the departure of our esteemed colleague, Kim McCoy Wade.

As Kim concludes her tenure, the stakeholder community is both grateful for her visionary leadership and disappointed to see her leave a role that has become instrumental to California's progress in building a state for all ages and abilities. While we understand there has been no formal announcement about the future of the position, we are writing proactively to underscore just how essential this role is to California's aging and disability policy landscape.

The creation of this position was not incidental - it was a cornerstone recommendation of California's Master Plan for Aging (MPA), and one of the most broadly supported priorities among stakeholders across sectors and regions. As one of your administration's signature initiatives, the MPA represents a lasting and impactful legacy, and the continued presence of this role is key to advancing that vision. The Senior Advisor has provided critical leadership, visibility, and cross-agency coordination, helping to translate the MPA's bold, equity-driven goals into meaningful action. This role has been an anchor in California's efforts to reimagine aging and disability in the 21st century.

While California is making tremendous progress on MPA implementation, the broader policy environment is increasingly unstable. At the federal level, we are seeing threats to Social Security, Medicaid, SNAP, housing support, and other pillars of the safety net that older adults and people with disabilities depend on. In the face of this national uncertainty and dysfunction, California must remain a beacon of clarity, compassion, and courageous leadership.

Maintaining a Senior Advisor within the Governor's Office is essential to helping California navigate this complex terrain while staying firmly grounded in the values and priorities that have defined the MPA: equity, inclusion, and a commitment to dignity for all. This role has served as a trusted convener and strategic connector, ensuring that the needs and strengths of older adults, people with disabilities, individuals living with Alzheimer's and other dementias, and family caregivers are reflected across programs and policies. To lose that leadership at this pivotal moment would risk stalling momentum and diminishing visibility for communities that already face persistent barriers and disparities.

We urge you to affirm your ongoing commitment to these communities by prioritizing the timely appointment of a successor who brings deep policy expertise,

lived experience, and a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities ahead. We hope this will be someone who can bridge the aging and disability communities and serve as a strong champion for both. California must continue to lead the nation - and bring hope to the millions of Californians who are aging, living with disabilities, caregiving for loved ones, or navigating cognitive decline. That leadership starts with ensuring representation at the highest levels of decision-making.

Thank you for your consideration, continued partnership, and leadership.

Sincerely,

AARP California  
Agency on Aging Area 4  
Alzheimer's Los Angeles  
Archstone Foundation  
Association of California Caregiver Resource Centers  
Association of Regional Center Agencies  
California Alliance for Retired Americans  
California Assisted Living Association (CALA)  
California Association for Adult Day Services  
California Association of Public Authorities for IHSS (CAPA)  
California Behavioral Health Association  
California Commission on Aging  
California Council of the Blind  
California Disability Services Association  
California Elder Justice Coalition  
California Foundation for Independent Living Centers  
California Health Advocates  
California In-Home Supportive Services Consumer Alliance  
California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association (CLTCOA)  
California Senior Legislature  
California State Council on Developmental Disabilities  
Californians for Disability Rights Inc  
CalPACE  
Center for Independence of Individuals With Disabilities  
Coalition for Compassionate Care of California (CCCC)  
Community Access Center  
Community Resources for Independent Living (CRIL)  
County of Marin  
Disability Action Center | DAN Coalition

El Dorado County Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program  
Empowered Aging  
Family Caregiver Alliance  
Fresno-Madera Long Term Care Ombudsman Program  
Hand in Hand: The Domestic Employers Network  
Health Projects Center  
Home & Health Care Management  
Home & Heart  
Home Health Care Management, Inc.  
homebridge  
Independent Living Resource Center San Francisco  
Inland Caregiver Resource Center  
Inland Coalition on Aging  
Integrated Community Services  
LeadingAge California  
LifeLong Medical Care  
Long Term Care Services of Ventura County, Inc.  
Marin Aging and Disability Institute  
Marin Center for Independent Living  
Multipurpose Senior Services Association (MSA)  
On Lok  
Passages Area Agency on Aging  
San Diego Senior Alliance  
Self-Help for the Elderly  
Senior Advocacy Network  
Senior Coastsiders  
Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County  
St. Barnabas Senior Services  
UDW/AFSCME Local 3930  
Valley Village Retirement Community  
Village Movement California

**CC:** Secretary Kim Johnson, California Health & Human Services Agency  
Susan DeMarois, Director, California Department of Aging