

**CCoA**  
California Commission on Aging

# AGEWATCH

## **\$201 billion 2018-19 state budget largely overlooks programs for older adults**



Governor Jerry Brown (center) is pictured with (left—right) Assembly Budget Chair Philip Ting, Senate Pro Tem Toni Atkins, Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, and Senate Budget Chair Holly Mitchell.

Governor Brown signed his final state budget last week while celebrating the state's \$9 billion surplus and the \$16 billion that he's socked-away in the state's "Rainy Day" fund.

Regardless of California's economic success, older adult programs fared poorly in the final state budget this month. No additional funding was granted for senior nutrition programs, despite the fact that the current allocation serves fewer than 6% of food-insecure elders whose lives could improve with access to congregate or home-delivered meals. The Multi-Purpose Senior Service Program, which requested a budget increase to stabilize the program's Medi-Cal reimbursement rate, was left out of the final budget, as was a small request from the Alzheimer's Association to increase funding for education and outreach in response to recent findings that many Alzheimer's patients aren't aware of their diagnoses and their families don't know where to turn.

Only a portion of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman's \$7.3 million request was approved, providing \$2.3 million to equalize funding for administration of the Ombudsman offices across the state. The allocation is paired with the loss of \$1 million from the Nursing Home Citation Penalty Account, resulting in a funding cut for the larger Ombudsman offices such as Los Angeles and San Diego. The Legislature's effort to expand the Medi-Cal aged and disabled program to include adults earning up to 138% of the federal poverty level was rejected by the Governor, as were efforts to restore additional Medi-Cal benefits that were lost during the Great Recession.

There are a few bright spots in the State Budget, however. The budget includes \$15 million for the Home Safe demonstration program, to make \$1 million competitive grants to each of fifteen county adult protective service agencies to assist abuse victims who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. A \$3 million allocation was approved to gather data on long-term services and supports needs across the state. The Governor also approved a cost-of-living increase for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients and the end of the "cash-out" practice that kept elderly and disabled SSI recipients from receiving Supplemental Nutrition benefits.

Photo from June 27, 2018 press release *Governor Brown Signs Final State Budget with Record Rainy Day Fund, School Funding*  
<https://www.gov.ca.gov/2018/06/27/governor-brown-signs-final-state-budget-with-record-rainy-day-fund-school-funding/>

AGEWATCH is an occasional publication of the California Commission on Aging (CCoA) intended to inform, educate, and advocate. The CCoA is an independent state agency established in 1973 to serve as the principal state advocate on behalf of older Californians. The CCoA office is located at 1300 National Drive, Suite 173, Sacramento, CA 95834. (916) 419-7591

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## Voter survey finds strong support for services and a plan to provide for older adults' needs

(Sacramento, CA) – An overwhelming majority (84 percent) of California voters would be more likely to support a candidate for governor who has a vision and long-term master plan to address the state's increasing need for senior services – and more than half (57 percent) would be willing to support a tax increase to fund it. These are among the key findings of a [statewide voter survey](#) conducted June 8-11 and released by *We Stand With Seniors...Will You?*

“Voters across all political spectrums and demographics clearly understand the state is not doing enough to ensure we can care for our growing senior population and they want something done now, before it's too late,” said Shelley Lyford, president and CEO of West Health. “Scaling best practices, expanding senior-specific programs and models of care that are working, and better utilization of existing resources can go a long way to address these critical needs.”

[West Health](#), along with [The SCAN Foundation](#), launched the nonpartisan, nonprofit *We Stand With Seniors* campaign earlier this year to educate policymakers about the needs of California seniors.

According to the [Public Policy Institute of California](#) (PPIC), the state's 65-and-older population is projected to grow nearly 90 percent. That is four million people by 2030, totaling 8.6 million seniors.

“Unless we address the growing needs of our seniors now by developing a master plan for aging, the state will be left with the same broken, fragmented system that is expensive and ineffective for families and taxpayers alike. Often, older adults and their caregivers find themselves slowly robbed of their dignity, choice and independence but with leadership here in California, it doesn't have to be that way,” said Bruce Chernof, MD, president and CEO of The SCAN Foundation.

Two out of three voters think the state is not doing enough for seniors now (64 percent) nor is it prepared to address their future needs (59 percent). The survey results come as voters prepare to select their next governor in November. And in a state where addressing homelessness and public safety are top priorities among voters (72 percent and 79 percent, respectively), a full 68 percent of voters believe that caring for our older adults, including supporting them with the tools to live, in accordance with their needs, values and preferences, is also a top priority.

Learn more about the [elements of a master plan](#).

Reprinted from *We Stand With Seniors* [June 19, 2018 press release](#).



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## Research finds link between LGBT health and socioeconomic status

New research finds that the older adult population is growing more diverse, with increasing diversity of sexual and gender status, as well as cultural and ethnic diversity. According to a report published by the American Society on Aging, there are more than 2.4 million lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) adults over age 50 in the U.S. and the population is expected to more than double by the year 2030.

The report, [Sexual Orientation, Socioeconomic Status, and Healthy Aging](#), examines recent research pointing to health challenges faced by LGBT older adults, including barriers to services, stigma, discrimination and related stressors, and how these factors play a role in an older adults socioeconomic status.

To read the full report, click [here](#).

Information from the American Society on Aging June 25 blog [Sexual Orientation, Socioeconomic Status, and Healthy Aging](#)



## Livability Index helps communities plan for aging population

A new AARP Livability Index was launched in June to help communities measure their ability to meet the needs of residents of all ages. The index uses over 50 national data sources combined with 60 indicators to determine a community's "livability" score. The goal is to help cities understand what is needed for people to remain in their homes and communities as they age while keeping those communities desirable and attractive for families.

Along with release of the AARP Livability Index, the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging also highlighted its work on livability, [Making Your Community Livable for All Ages](#), a guide which offers tips, best practices and case studies. [Click here](#) to learn more about the 2018 Livability Index.

Information from NASUAD Friday Update - June 22, 2018

## UPCOMING EVENTS

July 19, 2018 — Final Report of the California Task Force on Family Caregiving: Picking up the Pace of Change for California's Caregivers Report, an Informational Hearing of the Assembly Aging & Long-Term Care Committee. 1:00 — 3:00 p.m., USC's Andrus Gerontology Center Auditorium, Los Angeles. Email [kyliemey@usc.edu](mailto:kyliemey@usc.edu) for information.

August 1-2, 2018 — California Commission on Aging. Historic Cary House Hotel, Placerville. [Www.ccoa.ca.gov](http://www.ccoa.ca.gov) for agenda.

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