

CCoA
California Commission on Aging

AGEWATCH

2013 Declared the Year of Elder Abuse Prevention

The federal Administration on Aging (AoA) has declared 2013 the Year of Elder Abuse Prevention (YEAP), an initiative to increase national, state, and local efforts to protect older adults and raise awareness of abuse, neglect and exploitation. According to AoA, approximately 2.1 million seniors are victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation every year, representing a mere fraction of the actual unreported cases that occur.

The federal declaration coincides with the California Commission on Aging's focus on elder abuse in 2013, which will include sponsorship of legislation addressing elder and dependent adult abuse, an effort to educate and build elder abuse policy expertise within the Legislature, and hosting an elder justice summit in September in partnership with the California Elder Justice Coalition, the California Welfare Director's Association and the California Association of Area Agencies on Aging.

To assist service providers in combating abuse, the AoA has posted information, tools and resources for organizations to partner in raising public awareness and increasing the focus on prevention, detection, and response. The YEAP toolkit includes:

YEAP Toolkit Information Sheet: Protect Seniors in the Year of Elder Abuse Prevention

YEAP Outreach Guide: How Your Organization Can Generate Awareness and Foster Action to Guard Against Elder Abuse

Fact Sheets on prevention, warning signs, self advocacy, and more.

Additionally, AoA encourages the public to take a stand against elder abuse by submitting an online Pledge Card to do something extra this year to raise awareness in your community about elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation! The toolkit, pledge card and other resources are available at http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/AoA_Programs/Elder_Rights/YEAP/index.aspx



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

www.ccoa.ca.gov

Congress Postpones Fiscal Cliff Impacts

The American Taxpayer Relief Act passed by Congress January 1st includes both “positives and negatives for older adults,” according to a summary from the National Council on Aging (NCOA).

Congress avoided the fiscal cliff on New Year's Day by postponing for two months the across-the-board sequestration cuts, while at the same time reducing taxes and extending unemployment and healthcare benefits. NCOA reports the bill makes a \$12 billion spending cap reduction over two years for discretionary programs. Because Older Americans Act programs and other domestic programs are already scheduled to receive \$3 billion less than the new cap, no further cuts are anticipated.

The compromise agreement includes extended funding for Medicare low-income outreach and enrollment and delays by one year a 27% cut in Medicare physician payments. It authorizes Farm Bill through September, 2013, but cuts the State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) by \$110 million in FY 2013 to cover a cost increase in dairy producer payments.

On the negative side, NCOA reports that Congress repealed the Obama Administration's long-term care insurance program (CLASS Act). The Act instead created a new Long-Term Care Commission charged with developing a comprehensive long-term care plan for consideration by Congress.

To read NCOA's summary and get more information, visit <http://www.ncoa.org/public-policy-action/policy-news/fiscal-cliff-deal-positives.html>.

Excerpted from NCOA Week, January 2, 2013, *Fiscal Cliff Deal: What It Means for Seniors*.

Commission Elects Officers for 2013

The California Commission on Aging elected officers for 2013 at its December meeting in Long Beach.



Bert Bettis

Bert Bettis of Wilton was re-elected to a second one-year term as Chair of the Commission. Ms. Bettis is retired from the Adult Services Division of Sacramento County Health and Human Services Department. She was appointed to her second term on the Commission in March, 2012 by the Senate Rules Committee.

Virgie P. Walker of Carson was elected to serve as Vice Chair for 2013. Ms. Walker is President and CEO of People Coordinated Services of Southern California, Inc., a non-profit multi-service agency providing comprehensive services under three primary divisions: Youth and Family; Substance Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment; and Senior Services.

Ms. Walker was appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly to her second term on the Commission in August, 2012.

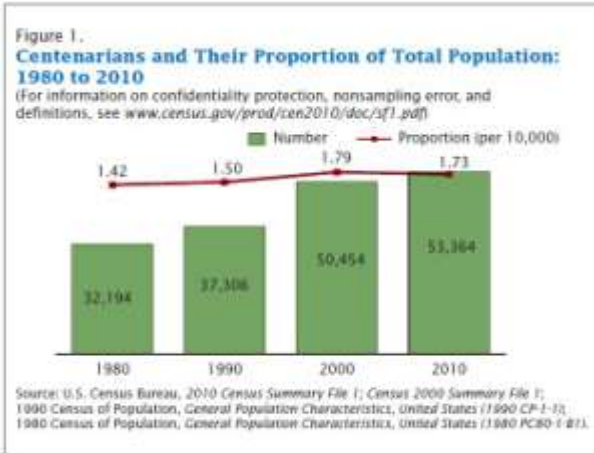


Virgie P. Walker

Other members elected to the Executive Committee in December include Donna Benton of Los Angeles (Legislative Advocacy Committee Chair), Lucille Fisher of San Francisco (Operational Procedures and Bylaws Committee Chair), and members-at-large Marian Last of Rossmoor and Barbara Mitchell of Riverside. Havard Staggs of Jackson is Immediate Past Chair.

Census Finds Highest Centenarian Population in California

A December report from the U.S. Census Bureau found California with nearly 6,000 residents age 100 or over in 2010, the largest centenarian population of any state in the nation. New York follows California with 4,605, ahead of Florida with 4,090 age 100 and over. Alaska and Wyoming have the lowest centenarian populations, with 40 and 73, respectively.



Despite California's numbers, the actual percentage of centenarians is just 1.6% of the state's total population, which is lower than the national average of 1.7%. Between the 1980 and 2010 censuses, the age 100 and over population grew by 65%, from 32,194 to over 53,000. Growth within the age group leveled out after 2000, increasing by only 5.8 percent through 2010. The report revealed that the nation's centenarians live predominantly in urban areas, are less racially diverse than the rest of the population, and reside in a wide variety of living arrangements when compared to the older adult population overall. The report, *Centenarians: 2010*, can be found under the 2010 Special Reports link at

www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/.

Medi-Cal Changes face Court Challenges: Provider Payments Drop; Managed Care Mandate Questioned

Last month's review by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals has given California the green light to reduce Medi-Cal provider payments by 10 percent. The Medi-Cal provider cut was included in the Governor's 2012-2013 State Budget, helping to lower the state's deficit by \$623 million.

Following CMS' approval in October of California's plan to implement the reduction, the California Medical Association (CMA) appealed the decision, citing already-low participation of physicians serving Medi-Cal patients. CMA reportedly feared the change would lower Medi-Cal participation by specialists, given that California already has one of the lowest Medicaid reimbursement rates in the nation. A Los Angeles Times report cited in California Health Line indicates that a shortage of Medi-Cal specialists is already having a serious impact on healthcare in the county, creating inefficient care and substantial appointment delays. To read more, visit <http://www.californiahealthline.org/articles/2013/1/3/ruling-could-worsen-shortage-of-specialists-participating-in-medi-cal.aspx#ixzz2H2AggfnW>.

A second court action focused on Medi-Cal challenges the State's requirement that Medi-Cal beneficiaries enroll in managed care. Filed by the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, the suit claims that forcing beneficiaries to switch to managed care harmed the seniors and beneficiaries involved in the shift.

Included as part of California's budget-tightening efforts, the shift involved moving 340,000 seniors and persons with disabilities from their fee-for-service providers into managed care, saving the state approximately \$151 million per year. The suit asserts that beneficiaries have lost access to specialists and physicians with whom they had existing relationships, and many who applied for exemptions were denied due to use of an exemption standard that exceeds what is lawfully allowed. More on the lawsuit is available at <http://www.californiahealthline.org/articles/2013/1/3/ruling-could-worsen-shortage-of-specialists-participating-in-medi-cal.aspx#ixzz2H2AggfnW>

Excerpted from California Health Line, January 3, 2013.

**California
Commission on Aging**

Bert Bettis, Chair,
Wilton

Virgie Walker,
Vice Chair,
Carson

Commissioners

Donna Benton,
Los Angeles

Rafael Cosio,
West Hollywood

Jim Davis,
Eureka

Paul Downey,
San Diego

Lucille Fisher,
San Francisco

Karen Josephson,
Long Beach

Marian Last,
Rossmore

Richard Lundin,
Benicia

Barbara Mitchell,
Riverside

Sharon Monck,
Rio Vista

Carmen Reyes,
Whittier

Havard L. Staggs,
Jackson

Donna Ueland,
Fresno

State Delays Adult Day Center Not-for-Profit Requirement

A new state requirement for adult day health care centers (ADHCs) to convert to non-profit status has been delayed for one year, according to a January 4 article published in California Health Line. The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) announced the postponement in a December 31, 2012 letter to ADHCs.

The delay offers a reprieve to about two-thirds of the state's 250 ADHCs with for-profit status. Officials at DHCS noted the difficulties for-profit centers and the state would face in pursuing the conversion at this time, including laws preventing non-profit organizations from overseeing for-profit enterprises and bank loans or leases that cannot be transferred from non-profit entities to for-profit entities.

Excerpted from CHCF, *State Delays Adult Day Center Not-for-Profit Requirement*, California Health Line, Jan.4, 2013.

Title III Expenditures Reduce Nursing Home Care

A study released by Brown University in December finds a direct link between the amount a state spends on low-income senior nutrition programs and the number of relatively healthy elders living in nursing homes.

Published in the journal Health Services Research, the report titled *The Relationship between Older Americans Act Title III State Expenditures and Prevalence of Low-Care Nursing Home Residents*, reviewed state spending for subsidized meal programs such as Meals on Wheels, finding that in states where spending was greater, fewer "low-care" elders were found to live in nursing homes. According to LeadingAge, the Brown study "is a first step in demonstrating the importance of Older Americans Act Programs, such as home delivered meals."

Excerpted from LeadingAge, *Research Indicates Importance of Meal Programs for Aging in Place*, by Peter Notarstefano, December 21, 2012.

AGEWATCH

January, 2013

Upcoming Events

January 7 -- State Legislature reconvenes

January 17 -- **Women's Policy Summit: Advancing Women's Health, Wealth & Power.** Sacramento convention Center. Registration at www.ccrwf.org.

February 6-7 -- Triple-A Council of California, Sacramento. www.4tacc.org for information.

February 28 - March 1 -- California Commission on Aging Meeting, Palm Springs. www.ccoa.ca.gov for information.

March 4-6 -- Aging Services of California 2013 Public Policy Conference, Sacramento. www.aging.org for information.

California Commission on Aging staff:
Sandra Fitzpatrick, M.A., Executive Director
Carol Sewell, MAG, Program Analyst on Aging
Marcella Lopez, Administrative Assistant