

CCoA  
California Commission on Aging

# AGEWATCH

## 2013 was a good year for senior-friendly bills

2013 proved a banner year for legislation benefitting California's older adult population, with Governor Brown signing numerous bills dealing with topics ranging from undue influence, to eligibility for benefits, to regulation of home care. Among this year's signed bills are:

- **AB 140** by Assemblymember Roger Dickinson – Elder/dependent adult financial abuse: undue influence
- **AB 191** by Assemblymember Raul Bocanegra – CalFresh: categorical eligibility
- **AB 247** by Assemblymember Donald P. Wagner – Personal income taxes: voluntary contribution: California Fund for Senior Citizens
- **AB 261** by Assemblymember Wes Chesbro – Residential care facilities for the elderly; fees and charges
- **AB 381** by Assemblymember Ed Chau -- Estates and trusts; undue influence and elder abuse
- **AB 394** by Assemblymember Mariko Yamada – Personal income tax: voluntary contributions: Alzheimer's Disease Research
- **AB 581** by Assemblymember Tom Ammiano – Care facilities; retaliation
- **AB 602** by Assemblymember Mariko Yamada – Mentally and developmentally disabled persons: reporting abuse
- **AB 663** by Assemblymember Jimmy Gomez – Care facilities and long-term care ombudsman; LGBT sensitivity training requirements
- **AB 753** by Assemblymember Bonnie Lowenthal – Cognitively impaired adults: caregiver resource centers
- **AB 776** by Assemblymember Mariko Yamada – Coordinated care initiative stakeholders; area agencies on aging and independent living centers
- **AB 849** by Assemblymember Cristina Garcia – Protection of victims; elder and dependent adult abuse victims address confidentiality
- **AB 918** by Assemblymember Ken Cooley – Emergency services; preparedness to evacuate persons with disabilities and others with mobility and functional needs
- **AB 1217** by Assemblymember Bonnie Lowenthal – Home Care Services Consumer Protection Act
- **SB 111** by Senator Jim Beall – Elections; voter signature stamps
- **SB 129** by Senator Rod Wright – Deaf and disabled telecommunications program.
- **SB 272** by Senator Ellen Corbett – Advertising and solicitations; government and military endorsements
- **SB 543** by Senator Marty Block – Petty theft; enhancements for prior convictions
- **SB 609** by Senator Lois Wolk – Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman
- **SB 612** by Senator Mark Leno – Residential tenancy; human trafficking and elder/dependent adult abuse victims
- **SB 770** by Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson – Unemployment Compensation; disability benefits; paid family leave

The full text of bills and the Governor's veto messages can be found at: <http://leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html>.

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](http://www.ccoa.ca.gov)

## Senate Committee to review Older Americans Act Reauthorization on October 30

The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee will meet on October 30 to consider S. 1562, a bipartisan bill to reauthorize the Older Americans Act (OAA) through 2018. The legislation, though more modest in scope than previous attempts to reauthorize the Act, represents a truly bipartisan effort to modernize the OAA. Introduced in late September by Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA), Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Bernie Sanders (I-VT), who all hold leadership positions on the HELP Committee, the bill maintains several priorities of the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD) membership, while addressing the concerns the organization had with earlier versions of the legislation.

Both NASUAD and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A) are asking their membership and other interested parties to urge members of the HELP Committee to approve the bill in its current form. Calling on other Senate representatives to also express their support to HELP Committee colleagues is also encouraged. The text of the bill, as well as a one-page summary, is available at: [www.nasuad.org/newsroom/archive/2013/oa\\_bill\\_introduced.html](http://www.nasuad.org/newsroom/archive/2013/oa_bill_introduced.html).

The Senate HELP Committee's Agenda for October 30<sup>th</sup> is available at [www.help.senate.gov/hearings/hearing/?id=5efdb751-5056-a032-52e5-d6f8e823b2d6](http://www.help.senate.gov/hearings/hearing/?id=5efdb751-5056-a032-52e5-d6f8e823b2d6).

*Excerpted from FW: n4a Advocacy Alert: Older Americans Act Bill Heads to Senate HELP Committee Vote on Wednesday - October 30, 2013 and NASUAD Friday Update - October 25, 2013*

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### SNAP benefits to decrease Nov. 1

Beginning Nov. 1, stimulus funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, or Food Stamps) expires. This means that SNAP benefits, which were boosted with stimulus funds, will be cut for all households.

The National Council on Aging (NCOA) estimates the average single-person household will see a decrease of about \$11/month in benefits. The figure can be significant, especially for those living on a fixed income, particularly when combined with the standard cost-of-living adjustments used to calculate SNAP eligibility and benefits due late in October. The result could be a slight *increase* in SNAP benefits *for some recipients* now, followed by a subsequent decrease in November.

NCOA encourages aging service providers to inform their clients who receive SNAP benefits about the decrease, especially during Part D Open Enrollment. SNAP offices already sent out notices in September and October to inform people about the change. Clients may still need further clarification regarding the benefit reduction. NCOA urges providers to help seniors maximize their SNAP benefits through use of the medical expense deduction or shelter deduction, which provide higher SNAP benefits for people meeting the following conditions:

**Medical Expense Deduction:** Older adults and individuals with disabilities can claim out-of-pocket costs over \$35 a month, including premiums and medical equipment, which can help increase their SNAP benefits.

**Shelter Deduction:** Clients can deduct certain household costs such as **rent/mortgage and utilities, if they are over half of the household's income**, possibly increasing their SNAP benefit. There is no cap on this deduction for older adults and individuals with disabilities.

Learn more about SNAP and how to help older adults facing this decrease through NCOA's SNAP Guide at <http://www.ncoa.org/assets/files/pdf/center-for-benefits/dealing-snap-cuts.pdf>

*Excerpted from NCOA Week, Oct. 22, 2013, SNAP benefits to decrease Nov. 1*



## State initiates CBAS stakeholder process

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and California Department of Aging (CDA) kicked-off of the Community Based Adult Services (CBAS) Stakeholder Process in October. Through a series of webinars and meetings, the State will gather input from interested stakeholders regarding the future of the Community Based Adult Service program. The information gathered will be used to address the possible amendment of and the renewal in August 2014 of the State's Bridge to Reform 1115 Medicaid Demonstration Waiver, which authorized the CBAS program.

Information for stakeholders is posted on the CDA website, and includes information on the stakeholder process, a CBAS program overview, CBAS center listings along with program requirements, training information and instructional letters for CBAS operators. The CBAS website is <http://www.aging.ca.gov/ProgramsProviders/ADHC-CBAS/>.

CBAS is the program that replaced California's Adult Day Health Care program in 2012 under the state's 1115 Bridge to Reform Medicaid waiver.



## California and Oregon benefit from higher ACA funding through Community First Choice Options

California's participation in the Community First Choice Option (CFCO) makes it one of only two states benefitting from this new financing option made possible through the Affordable Care Act. The new program allows states to draw an additional 6% Medicaid dollars for home care services designed to enable frail elders and individuals with disabilities to remain in their homes.

California is using the program to increase the federal match for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS). Both California and Oregon, the only other state to take advantage of CFCO funding, were well-positioned to utilize the CFCO due to well-developed IHSS systems already in place. California's participation in CFCO was approved in 2012.

Information on California's IHSS program is available at <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/agedblinddisabled/PG1296.htm>.

Information from California Health Care Foundation, CALIFORNIA ONE OF TWO STATES CASHING IN ON NEW ACA LONG-TERM CARE FUNDING, California HealthLine Friday, October 18, 2013



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## Aging Services Meets Silicon Valley:

Creating the Future of Care

November 14-15, 2013

Marriott Hotel – San Jose, California

Presented By

LeadingAge<sup>™</sup>  
California

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California Commission on Aging is a *Supporting Organization* of the  
AgeTech West Annual Conference and Technology Exhibition

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## Upcoming Events

November 12 - 13, 2013. California Commission on Aging, Sheraton Grand, Sacramento  
[www.ccoa.ca.gov](http://www.ccoa.ca.gov) for information

November 13, 2013. California Summit on Long-Term Services and Supports: The State of  
System Transformation, Sacramento. Information at <http://thescanfoundation.org/register-now-2013-california-summit-long-term-services-and-supports-state-system-transformation>

November 20 - 22, 2013. C4A Annual Meeting and Allied Conference, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles. [www.c4aregistration.info/](http://www.c4aregistration.info/)

December 3-6, 2013. National Elder Abuse Symposium, Anaheim. Information and registration at [www.cdaa.org/training](http://www.cdaa.org/training)

## California Commission on Aging staff:

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