

April 2022

The Honorable Phil Ting, Chair
Assembly Budget Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Joaquin Arambula, Chair
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1
1021 O Street, Suite 6240
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for budget request made by Assemblymember Ash Karla for a \$1.624 million Ongoing Investment for the Restoration of County Based IHSS Public Authority Consumer Advisory Committees and Governing Boards

Dear Assemblymember Ting and Assemblymember Arambula:

The undersigned organizations write today to request that you approve the budget request from Assemblymember Ash Karla to restore the funding for county-based IHSS Public Authority Advisory Committees and Governing Boards for the ongoing investment of \$1.624 million for that purpose.

The functioning of the IHSS Public Authority Advisory Committees (AC) and Governing Boards (GB) was drastically impacted when their funding was cut from \$56,000 to \$6,000 per year during the state's fiscal crisis in 2011. This funding has never been restored and the ACs and GBs have struggled to successfully perform their required mandates under the law – AB 1682.

The law requires that ACs and GBs provide much-needed oversight and recommendations on the delivery of IHSS for over 600,000 seniors and people with disabilities. These committees are the voice of the IHSS consumer and are required to have a 51 percent consumer majority. These committees were also charged with giving input and recommendations to any entity that had influence or authority over IHSS at the county, state, or federal level.

The Public Authorities, though linked, are a separate entity from the ACs and GBs. They are mandated to be the employer of record for union negotiations, provide a registry of workers, oversee worker eligibility and benefits, and provide training for consumers and providers. The ACs and GBs engage in their role of oversight and giving recommendations for improvement for these functions.

The loss of funding for the ACs and GBs greatly reduced how well they could function. Additional funding will greatly help with the following:

- Outreach for new members for existing committees and development of committees in Counties that do not have mandated ones. Only about half of California counties have functioning committees;
- Training and education of committee members. IHSS is an extremely complicated and ever-changing program. There is a steep initial learning curve and need for ongoing education;
- The need to connect with IHSS consumers for their input on how the program is working through surveys, town halls, brochures, newsletters, social media, and websites. The committees, in order to be the consumers' voice, need to hear from consumers;
- The need to connect with other committees for best practices and brainstorming;
- Funding for stipends, ADA compliance, travel for committee members, etc.;
- Digital upgrades for meetings. Hybrid meetings will greatly help with committee membership;
- A tremendous need for outreach for IHSS providers. There is a huge shortage now, and many consumers are going without needed help. This will take creativity and funding; and
- Consumer education has never taken place. It is vital and funding is needed.

For these reasons, and many more not specified, we the undersigned organizations are requesting the restoration of funding to the original level of \$56,000 per county to enable IHSS Advisory Committees and Governing Boards to function at their maximum capabilities for the benefit of the IHSS consumers and providers.

Sincerely,