



County of Santa Cruz

IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES PUBLIC AUTHORITY

18 W. Beach Street, Watsonville, CA; P.O. Box 1300, Santa Cruz, CA 95061

(831) 454-4036 FAX: (831) 763-8906

Notice of Public Meeting and Agenda

IHSS Advisory Commission

SPECIAL MEETING

Date: Friday, April 29, 2022

Time: 1:00PM to 2:00PM

Pursuant to AB 361 and Cal. Gov. Code section 54953, due to the ongoing COVID 19 state of emergency and upon recommendation of the County Health Officer, public meetings of the IHSS Advisory Commission will be conducted in remote format. Members of the public can attend virtually by teleconference.

PLEASE DIAL-IN TO THE TELECONFERENCE USING THE INFORMATION LISTED BELOW:

TELECONFERENCE INFORMATION

United States: (831) 454-2222

Phone Conference ID: 932 082 343#

FOR QUESTIONS REGARDING THE REMOTE MEETING PROCESS, PLEASE CONTACT THE PUBLIC AUTHORITY AT (831) 454-4036 OR JUAN.MAGANA@SANTACRUZCOUNTY.US

Special Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Agenda Review
4. Oral Communications and Announcements: *Anyone wishing to address the commission on any item within the jurisdiction of the Commission and not listed on the agenda may do so at this time. Comments are limited to three (3) minutes in duration.*
5. Special Meeting Agenda – Action Items
 - a. Election of Officers
 - b. Request for Letter of Support to Increase Advisory Committee Funding ...Page 2.
6. Adjournment

Next Regular Meeting: May 27, 2022, 1:00PM – 3:00PM

The County of Santa Cruz complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. This meeting room is accessible for people with disabilities. If you wish to discuss reasonable modifications or accommodations, please call 454-4036 prior to the meeting. For the comfort of those with allergies and chemical sensitivities, please do not wear perfume or scented products to the meeting.

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FAX (916) 319-2127

DISTRICT OFFICE
100 PASEO DE SAN ANTONIO, SUITE 319
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COMMITTEES
CHAIR: LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
AGING AND LONG-TERM CARE
EDUCATION
JUDICIARY
WATER, PARKS, AND WILDLIFE

March 29, 2022

The Honorable Joaquin Arambula
Assembly Budget Subcommittee 1
1021 O Street, Suite 6240
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Request for a \$1.624 million Ongoing Investment for the Restoration of County-Based IHSS Public Authority Consumer Advisory Committees and Governing Boards

Dear Assemblymember Arambula,

I am writing to respectfully request \$1.624 million ongoing to restore the original funding levels of county-based In-Home Support Services (IHSS) Public Authority Consumer Advisory Committees and Governing Boards. These funds would be administered by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and divided equally among California's 58 counties to enable these Advisory Committees and Governing Boards to provide much-needed oversight and recommendations on the delivery of IHSS to the over 600,000 seniors and people with disabilities they serve.

The IHSS Public Authority was established to address the challenges individuals were facing in simply finding providers and reports of horrendous conditions in the delivery of IHSS where consumers were "unsafe in their own homes" according to a 1991 Little Hoover Commission report. In response, the Legislature required counties to establish an IHSS Public Authority to include a Consumer Advisory Committee or Governing Board. Legislative mandates also set the Public Authority as the employer of record for IHSS providers, established a registry for consumers and providers to find each other, and provided information on training for consumers and providers.

Fundamental to the original public authority legislation was the consumer role in the oversight of the delivery of IHSS. Consumer Advisory Committees or Governing Board were required to be made up of at least 51% current or past personal assistance users and include advocates, as well as other organizations serving people who utilize IHSS. These committees were charged with giving input and recommendations to any entity that had influence or authority over IHSS at the county, state, or federal level.

Unfortunately, during the budget crisis in 2011, the requirement for counties to maintain these committees became optional and funding was drastically reduced from \$56,000 to \$6,000 a year

per county. This funding was never restored and since then, consumer input on IHSS policies and practices has been severely limited.

Currently, only 32 of the 58 counties have public web-accessible information about their Advisory Committee or Governing Board. This means consumers have no information on when these Committees or Boards meet, how a consumer can apply to serve on the Committee or Governing Board, and most importantly, no information on how a consumer can give input on their IHSS services. Furthermore, for those counties that even have information for their Advisory Committees and Governing Boards, much of the content, including rosters, meeting agendas, and minutes, tend to be out-of-date thus undermining the fundamental role of the Public Authority.

This lack of accessibility to vital information and opportunities for IHSS recipients to provide input comes at a particularly critical time amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that has disproportionately impacted these same vulnerable populations. The urgency of this issue is further exacerbated by the current IHSS provider shortage crisis in which thousands of seniors and people with disabilities who have been approved for IHSS cannot find a provider.

For these reasons, I respectfully request your support for \$1.624 million ongoing to return the original funding levels for county-based IHSS Public Authority Consumer Advisory Committees and Governing Boards. The Legislature has previously recognized the need for this public accountability of IHSS and it is time we restore that commitment to the health and safety of our elderly and people with disabilities populations. Should you or your staff have additional questions, please feel free to contact Erika Ngo, Erika.Ngo@asm.ca.gov, in my office.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Assemblymember Ash Kalra
27th Assembly District

cc: Honorable Members of the Assembly Budget Committee
Nicole Vazquez, Assembly Budget Subcommittee 2

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,