

SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA



ITEM
3.3
(ID # 6967)

MEETING DATE:
Tuesday, May 8, 2018

FROM : EXECUTIVE OFFICE:

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE OFFICE: Legislative Bills to Support, All Districts. [\$0]

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the Executive Office to Send letters of support to the following items that are not covered in the 2018 Legislative Platform, AB 2598 (Quirk), & Budget request to Increase Funding to Address Senior Hunger.

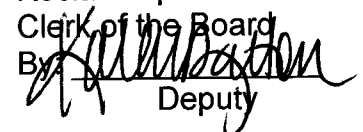
ACTION: Policy


Brian Nestande 4/30/2018

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Jeffries, seconded by Supervisor Perez and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is approved as recommended.

Ayes: Jeffries, Tavaglione, Washington, Perez and Ashley
Nays: None
Absent: None
Date: May 8, 2018
xc: EO

Kecia Harper-Ihem
Clerk of the Board
By 
Deputy

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost
COST	\$	\$	\$	\$
NET COUNTY COST	\$	\$	\$	\$
SOURCE OF FUNDS:			Budget Adjustment: No	
			For Fiscal Year: \$0	

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BACKGROUND:

Summary

As per Board Policy A-27, the purpose of Riverside County's Legislative Program is to secure legislation that benefits the county and its residents, and to oppose/amend legislation that might adversely affect the County. Recognizing the need for consistency in conveying official positions on legislative matters, the county has instituted a coordinated process involving interaction between the Board of Supervisors, the County Executive Office, County agencies/departments, and the County's legislative advocates in Sacramento and Washington, D.C.

The following bill was not covered in the County's 2017 or 2018 Platform, and requires the Board of Supervisors to take formal position before sending any letters of support or opposition.

Support for the budget request to increase funding to address senior hunger comes from the Office on Aging.

RECOMMENDED BILLS:

Bill: AB 2598 (Quirk) Vacant & Blighted Property Violations

Position: SUPPORT

Background: Current law allows counties and cities to establish ordinances, and makes violations of ordinances misdemeanors, unless by ordinance the county or city makes them infractions. The violation of an ordinance may be prosecuted by county or city authorities in the name of the people of the State of California, or redressed by civil action.

The fine amounts for ordinance violations have not been adjusted since 1983. An attempt to do so was made in 2003, but the Legislature chose instead to establish the increased fine amounts for building and safety code violations. These fine amounts have not changed since then.

Number of violations within specified time periods	Amount of fine for ordinance violations that are infractions (last adjusted in 1983)	Amount of fine for building and safety code violations that are infractions (established in 2003)

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First violation	Fine does not exceed \$100	Fine does not exceed \$100
Second violation within one year of first violation	Fine does not exceed \$200	Fine does not exceed \$500
Third violation within one year of first violation	Fine does not exceed \$500	Fine does not exceed \$1,000

This bill increases the fines that counties and cities may assess for violations of their local building and safety codes, and adds a new fine for specified repeat violations of building and safety codes on commercial property. The proposed fine structure is as follows:

Number of violations within specified time periods	Amount of fine for building and safety code violations that are infractions
First violation	Fine does not exceed \$130
Second violation within one year of first violation	Fine does not exceed \$700
Subsequent violations within one year of first violation	Fine does not exceed \$1,300
Subsequent violations within two years of first violation, if the property is a commercial property and the violation is due to failure by the owner to remove visible refuse or failure to prohibit unauthorized use of the property	Fine does not exceed \$2,500

Bill: Request to Increase Funding to Address Senior Hunger

Position: SUPPORT

Background: This budget request will augment existing senior nutrition programs with an additional \$17 million to lead the way in aggressively combating senior hunger throughout California. These additional funds would provide for an extra two million meals per year, and would serve over 12,500 more vulnerable older Californians.

While this additional appropriation would not fully address the nearly 1.3 million Californians over the age of 60 who are considered food insecure, it would allow some of the most vulnerable residents to have a greater sense of food security than they do today. Funding for nutrition has not been adjusted for the past eight years.

The budget request is co-sponsored by California Association of Area Agencies on Aging, California Commission on Aging, and the Congress of California Seniors. Support is coming

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from Meals on Wheels California and the California Collaborative for Long-term Supports and Services (LTSS).

ATTACHMENTS:

- Fact Sheet
- Bill
- Floor Analysis
- Budget Request Fact Sheet



Assembly Member Bill Quirk, 20th Assembly District

AB 2598 – VACANT & BLIGHTED PROPERTY VIOLATIONS

(UPDATED – 4.518)

BACKGROUND

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (USHUD), “vacant and abandoned properties are linked to increased rates of crime (particularly arson) and declining property values.”

In cities and counties across California, many commercial property owners do not properly maintain vacant properties, leading to criminal activity and the accumulation of debris, among other things. These properties are troubling and unsightly; USHUD states that they present an increased risk to health and welfare, escalate municipal costs because of the resources needed to police and protect them, and contribute to overall community decline and disinvestment.

Cities and counties use “nuisance abatement” fines and penalties for these types of violations to not only incentivize compliance, but also innovation. Abandoned or blighted properties could be restored for any number of things to improve its surrounding community such as affordable housing, shopping centers, or parks.

EXISTING LAW

Current law allows a city or county to collect fees on properties when there are violations deemed to be dangerous, offensive, or obstructive. This may include instances such as a tree blocking public access to the sidewalk or exorbitant amounts of refuse left around the property. The fines for violating building and safety codes violations range from \$100 to \$1,000.

PROBLEM

Fines for building and safety code violations in cities and counties have remained stagnant for nearly 20 years. Cities across California are struggling to hold property owners accountable and are finding that under the current landscape, property owners are not incentivized to clean up or revitalize the property.

SOLUTION

AB 2598 addresses the issue of vacant or blighted properties by increasing the incentive to comply with local ordinances. This bill raises the fees that may be assessed for violations of city and county building and safety codes. The new fines for violations are as follows:

- \$130 for a first violation;
- \$700 for a second violation of the same ordinance within one year;
- \$1,300 for each additional violation of the same ordinance within one year; and
- \$2,500 for each additional violation of the same ordinance within two years.

SUPPORT

- League of California Cities (Sponsor)
- California Association of Code Enforcement Officers (Co-Sponsor)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Matthew Canty, *Senior Legislative Assistant*
(916) 319-2020
Matthew.Canty@asm.ca.gov

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 16, 2018
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 22, 2018
CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2017–18 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2598

Introduced by Assembly Member Quirk

February 15, 2018

An act to amend Sections 25132 and 36900 of the Government Code, relating to local government.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2598, as amended, Quirk. Cities: ordinances: violations.

Existing law authorizes the legislative body of a city or a county to make, by ordinance, any violation of an ordinance subject to an administrative fine or penalty and limits the maximum fine or penalty amounts for infractions, to \$100 for the first violation, \$200 for a 2nd violation of the same ordinance within one year of the first violation, and \$500 for each additional violation of the same ordinance within one year of the first violation. For violations of city or county building and safety codes determined to be an infraction, existing law limits the amount of the fine to \$100 for a first violation, \$500 for a 2nd violation of the same ordinance within one year, and \$1,000 for each additional violation of the same ordinance within one year of the first violation.

~~This bill would, for infractions, increase the amounts of the fines to \$130 for a first violation, \$300 for a 2nd violation of the same ordinance within one year, and \$800 for each additional violation of the same ordinance within one year of the first violation.~~ The bill would, for violations of a local building and safety code determined to be an infraction, increase the amounts of the fines to \$130 for a first violation,

\$700 for a 2nd violation of the same ordinance within one year, and \$1,300 for each additional violation of the same ordinance within one year of the first violation. The bill would additionally provide for a fine of \$2,500 for each additional violation of the same ordinance within 2 years of the first violation if the property is a commercial property and the violation is *of a local building and safety code that is an infraction and is due to failure by the owner to remove visible refuse or failure to prohibit unauthorized use of the property.*

The bill would additionally require a city or county levying ~~these~~ fines *pursuant to these provisions* to establish a process for granting a hardship waiver to reduce the amount of the fine *for a second or third violation of the same ordinance or local building and safety code that is an infraction* upon a showing by the responsible party that the responsible party has made a bona fide effort to comply after the first violation and that payment of the full amount of the fine would impose an undue financial burden on the responsible party.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 25132 of the Government Code is
2 amended to read:
3 25132. (a) Violation of a county ordinance is a misdemeanor
4 unless by ordinance it is made an infraction. The violation of a
5 county ordinance may be prosecuted by county authorities in the
6 name of the people of the State of California, or redressed by civil
7 action.
8 (b) Every violation that is an infraction is punishable by the
9 following:
10 (1) A fine not exceeding one hundred ~~thirty~~ dollars ~~(\$130)~~
11 ~~(\$100)~~ for a first violation.
12 (2) A fine not exceeding ~~three two~~ hundred dollars ~~(\$300)~~ ~~(\$200)~~
13 for a second violation of the same ordinance within one year of
14 the first violation.
15 (3) A fine not exceeding ~~eight~~ five hundred dollars ~~(\$800)~~ ~~(\$500)~~
16 for each additional violation of the same ordinance within one year
17 of the first violation.
18 (c) Notwithstanding any other law, a violation of local building
19 and safety codes that is an infraction is punishable by the following:

1 (1) A fine not exceeding one hundred thirty dollars (\$130) for
2 a first violation.

3 (2) A fine not exceeding seven hundred dollars (\$700) for a
4 second violation of the same ordinance within one year of the first
5 violation.

6 (3) (A) A fine not exceeding one thousand three hundred dollars
7 (\$1,300) for each additional violation of the same ordinance within
8 one year of the first violation.

9 (B) A fine not exceeding two thousand five hundred dollars
10 (\$2,500) for each additional violation of the same ordinance within
11 two years of the first violation if the property is a commercial
12 property and the violation is due to failure by the owner to remove
13 visible refuse or failure to prohibit unauthorized use of the property.

14 (d) A county levying a fine pursuant to paragraphs (2) and (3)
15 of subdivisions (b) and (c) shall establish a process for granting a
16 hardship waiver to reduce the amount of the fine upon a showing
17 by the responsible party that the responsible party has made a bona
18 fide effort to comply after the first violation and that payment of
19 the full amount of the fine would impose an undue financial burden
20 on the responsible party.

21 (e) (1) Notwithstanding any other law, including subdivisions
22 (b) and (c), a violation of an event permit requirement that is an
23 infraction is punishable by the following:

24 (A) A fine not exceeding one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) for
25 the first violation of an event permit requirement.

26 (B) A fine not exceeding seven hundred dollars (\$700) for a
27 second occurrence of the same violation of an event permit
28 requirement by the same owner or operator within three years of
29 the first violation.

30 (C) A fine not exceeding two thousand five hundred dollars
31 (\$2,500) for each additional occurrence of the same violation of
32 an event permit requirement by the same owner or operator within
33 three years of the first violation.

34 (2) (A) For purposes of this subdivision, “violation of an event
35 permit requirement” means failure to obtain a permit required for
36 a professionally organized special event on private property that
37 is commercial in nature, or from which the owner or operator
38 derives a commercial benefit.

39 (B) For purposes of this paragraph, the following definitions
40 apply:

1 (i) "Commercial in nature" means that a primary purpose of the
2 special event is to derive an economic benefit resulting from the
3 holding of the event through admission charges or sales of
4 merchandise that occur as part of the event.

5 (ii) "Commercial benefit" means any remuneration received in
6 exchange for allowing the property on which the event occurs to
7 be used for the event, including any remuneration that results from
8 the rental of the property for a term of less than 31 consecutive
9 days.

10 SEC. 2. Section 36900 of the Government Code is amended
11 to read:

12 36900. (a) Violation of a city ordinance is a misdemeanor
13 unless by ordinance it is made an infraction. The violation of a
14 city ordinance may be prosecuted by city authorities in the name
15 of the people of the State of California, or redressed by civil action.

16 (b) Every violation determined to be an infraction is punishable
17 by the following:

18 (1) A fine not exceeding one hundred ~~thirty~~ dollars ~~(\$130)~~
19 ~~(\$100)~~ for a first violation.

20 (2) A fine not exceeding ~~three two~~ hundred dollars ~~(\$300)~~ ~~(\$200)~~
21 for a second violation of the same ordinance within one year.

22 (3) A fine not exceeding ~~eight five~~ hundred dollars ~~(\$800)~~ ~~(\$500)~~
23 for each additional violation of the same ordinance within one
24 year.

25 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a violation of
26 local building and safety codes determined to be an infraction is
27 punishable by the following:

28 (1) A fine not exceeding one hundred thirty dollars (\$130) for
29 a first violation.

30 (2) A fine not exceeding seven hundred dollars (\$700) for a
31 second violation of the same ordinance within one year.

32 (3) (A) A fine not exceeding one thousand three hundred dollars
33 (\$1,300) for each additional violation of the same ordinance within
34 one year of the first violation.

35 (B) A fine not exceeding two thousand five hundred dollars
36 (\$2,500) for each additional violation of the same ordinance within
37 two years of the first violation if the property is a commercial
38 property and the violation is due to failure by the owner to remove
39 visible refuse or failure to prohibit unauthorized use of the property.

1 (d) A city levying a fine pursuant to paragraphs (2) and (3) of
2 subdivisions (b) and (c) shall establish a process for granting a
3 hardship waiver to reduce the amount of the fine upon a showing
4 by the responsible party that the responsible party has made a bona
5 fide effort to comply after the first violation and that payment of
6 the full amount of the fine would impose an undue financial burden
7 on the responsible party.

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ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 2598 (Quirk)

As Amended April 16, 2018

Majority vote

Committee	Votes	Ayes	Noes
Local Government	8-1	Aguiar-Curry, Waldron, Bloom, Caballero, Cooley, Grayson, Lackey, Gloria	Voepel

SUMMARY: Increases the fine amounts that counties and cities may assess for violations of their building and safety codes, and creates a new fine for specified violations of building and safety codes on commercial property. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Provides that a violation of local building and safety codes determined to be an infraction is punishable by the following:
 - a) A fine not exceeding \$130 for a first violation (increased from the current \$100 limit);
 - b) A fine not exceeding \$700 for a second violation of the same ordinance within one year (increased from the current \$500 limit);
 - c) A fine not exceeding \$1,300 for each additional violation of the same ordinance within one year of the first violation (increased from the current \$1,000 limit); and,
 - d) A fine not exceeding \$2,500 for each additional violation of the same ordinance within two years of the first violation if the property is a commercial property and the violation is due to failure by the owner to remove visible refuse or failure to prohibit unauthorized use of the property.
- 2) Requires a county or city levying a fine for repeat violations, as specified above, to establish a process for granting a hardship waiver to reduce the amount of the fine upon a showing by the responsible party that the responsible party has made a bona fide effort to comply after the first violation and that payment of the full amount of the fine would impose an undue financial burden on the responsible party.

FISCAL EFFECT: None

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Background.** A county or city may make and enforce within its limits all local, police, sanitary, and other ordinances and regulations not in conflict with general laws. This "police power" provides the right to adopt and enforce zoning regulations, as long as they do not conflict with state laws.

Current law allows counties and cities to establish ordinances, and makes violations of ordinances misdemeanors, unless by ordinance the county or city makes them infractions. The violation of an ordinance may be prosecuted by county or city authorities in the name of the people of the State of California, or redressed by civil action. Current law outlines the

following fine structure for ordinance violations, and for building and safety code violations, that are determined to be infractions:

Number of violations within specified time periods	Amount of fine for ordinance violations that are infractions (last adjusted in 1983)	Amount of fine for building and safety code violations that are infractions (established in 2003)
First violation	Fine does not exceed \$100	Fine does not exceed \$100
Second violation within one year of first violation	Fine does not exceed \$200	Fine does not exceed \$500
Third violation within one year of first violation	Fine does not exceed \$500	Fine does not exceed \$1,000

The fine amounts for ordinance violations have not been adjusted since 1983. An attempt to do so was made in 2003, but the Legislature chose instead to establish the increased fine amounts for building and safety code violations. These fine amounts have not changed since then.

In addition to the fines outlined above, counties (not cities) may assess fines specifically for a violation of an event permit requirement that is an infraction. These fines are capped at \$150 for a first violation, \$700 for a second occurrence of the same violation by the same owner or operator within three years of the first violation, and \$2,500 for each additional occurrence of the same violation by the same owner or operator within three years of the first violation. These special fines were enacted just last year, via AB 556 (Limón), Chapter 405, Statutes of 2017.

- 2) **Fines in Today's Dollars.** As noted above, the fine amounts for ordinance violations have not been increased since 1983. The fine amounts for building and safety code violations were established in 2003 and have not been adjusted since then. In today's dollars, these amounts would be approximately as follows:

Number of violations within specified time periods	Amount of fine for ordinance violations (adjusted from 1983)	Amount of fine for building and safety code violations (adjusted from 2003)
First violation	Fine does not exceed \$254	Fine does not exceed \$136
Second violation within one year of first violation	Fine does not exceed \$509	Fine does not exceed \$680
Third violation within one year of first violation	Fine does not exceed \$1,272	Fine does not exceed \$1,360

- 3) **Additional Penalties Levied by the Courts.** Pursuant to the Penal Code and the Government Code, additional penalties are levied on every fine, penalty or forfeiture

imposed by and collected by the courts for criminal offenses. Penal Code Section 1464 levies a penalty of \$10 for every \$10 or fraction thereof on every fine, penalty or forfeiture imposed by and collected by the courts for criminal offenses. Penal Code Section 1465.7 requires a state surcharge of 20% to be levied on every base fine collected by the courts. Government Code Section 76000 levies an additional penalty of \$7 for every \$10 or fraction thereof upon every fine, penalty, or forfeiture imposed and collected by the courts for criminal offenses.

- 4) **Nuisance Abatement.** Both cities and counties are allowed, via ordinance, to establish administrative procedures for abating nuisances that include the ability to recover abatement costs via special assessments and abatement liens. A public nuisance is generally defined as "Anything which is injurious to health, or is indecent, or offensive to the senses, or an obstruction to the free use of property, so as to interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property by an entire community or neighborhood, or by any considerable number of persons, or unlawfully obstructs the free passage or use, in the customary manner, of any navigable lake, or river, bay, stream, canal, or basin, or any public park, square, street, or highway." In addition, a city's legislative body may declare what constitutes a nuisance via ordinance.
- 5) **Bill Summary.** This bill increases the fines that counties and cities may assess for violations of their local building and safety codes, and adds a new fine for specified repeat violations of building and safety codes on commercial property.

The proposed fine structure is as follows:

Number of violations within specified time periods	Amount of fine for building and safety code violations that are infractions
First violation	Fine does not exceed \$130
Second violation within one year of first violation	Fine does not exceed \$700
Subsequent violations within one year of first violation	Fine does not exceed \$1,300
Subsequent violations within two years of first violation, if the property is a commercial property and the violation is due to failure by the owner to remove visible refuse or failure to prohibit unauthorized use of the property	Fine does not exceed \$2,500

A county or city levying a fine for repeat violations, as specified above, must establish a process for granting a hardship waiver to reduce the amount of the fine if the responsible party shows a bona fide effort to comply after the first violation, and demonstrates that payment of the full amount of the fine would impose an undue financial burden on the responsible party.

This bill is sponsored by the League of California Cities and the California Association of Code Enforcement Officers.

- 6) **Author's Statement.** According to the author, "Cities across California are struggling with how to deal with abandoned buildings. Many have expressed frustration at the restrictions they face with respect to fines they can issue owners for failure to properly maintain their properties...In my district, there have been numerous incidences of commercial property owners refusing to properly maintain vacant properties, leading to the accumulation of debris and brake-ins. Such is the case with a building across from my district office that has been abandoned for over 20 years.

"Maximum permitted fines for local building and safety codes have not been updated in over 15 years. Additionally, in some cases, court processes to collect fines have become too onerous for cities and counties to collect. The statutory fines should be updated to at least reflect inflation, in order to enable cities and counties to effectively enforce local ordinances and building and safety codes.

"AB 2598 adjusts the fees that counties and cities may assess and collect for violations of local building and safety codes with inflation. This bill will help cities and counties hold owners accountable to their communities by maintaining property values and reducing crime and other risks to public health."

- 7) **Policy Considerations.** The Legislature may wish to consider the following:
- a) **Nuisance Abatement Procedures.** As noted above, cities and counties are able to abate nuisances and hold property owners accountable for those costs via special assessments and abatement liens. The Legislature may wish to consider whether cities and counties already have the necessary authority to address the conditions that the author has cited as the impetus for this bill.
 - b) **Court Action.** Existing law provides that a violation of an ordinance may be prosecuted by city or county authorities, or redressed by civil action. The Legislature may wish to consider whether this bill is needed, given these avenues of redress.
 - c) **Legislative Review.** The Legislature may wish to consider adding a sunset date to allow the Legislature to revisit this bill's increased fine amounts to determine if they do, indeed, result in greater compliance with local ordinances.
- 8) **Previous Legislation.** AB 345 (Ridley-Thomas) of 2017, would have allowed cities and counties to recover nuisance abatement fines through nuisance abatement liens and special assessments, and would have increased the maximum allowable fines for violations of city building and safety codes. AB 345 was subsequently amended to address a different subject.

AB 556 (Limón), Chapter 405, Statutes of 2017, allowed counties to assess increased fines for a violation of an event permit requirement that is an infraction as follows: a fine not exceeding \$150 for the first violation; a fine not exceeding \$700 for a second occurrence of the same violation by the same owner or operator within three years of the first violation; and, a fine not exceeding \$2,500 for each additional occurrence of the same violation by the same owner or operator within three years of the first violation.

AB 514 (Williams) of 2015, would have allowed counties to assess larger administrative fines for specified violations of county ordinances determined to be infractions that govern

building and safety, brush removal, grading, film permitting, and zoning. AB 514 was vetoed with the following message:

The public's health and safety is compromised when people willfully violate county ordinances. Deterring such behavior is a worthwhile goal. This bill, however, lacks the balance needed to prevent unintended consequences, especially on those with modest means and those who are unfamiliar with their local ordinances.

- 9) **Arguments in Support.** The League of California Cities, sponsor of this bill, writes, "Local ordinances and building and safety codes reflect policies adopted by communities to establish standards, resolve issues, maintain public and private property, and protect public health and safety. There must be adequate enforcement mechanisms for these laws to be effective. While existing law authorizes various levels of fines, including up to \$100 for the first violation, these statutory amounts have not been updated in many years.

"Inadequate penalties can erode respect for the law. If the consequences for violating a local ordinance or building standard are deemed to be minimal then some community members will ignore the law and create inequities in its application. For instance, if an ordinance requires dry brush to be cleared for fire protection, and a property owner chooses not to do so, they could be placing the homes of their neighboring properties at risk. If one property owner allows trash and junk to build up on their property, it could attract vermin and devalue adjacent properties.

"Obviously, the appropriate level of the fines is a policy question. They need to be high enough to encourage compliance, while avoiding being overly burdensome or disproportionate on the unaware or first offenders, with more severe penalties for those that violate repeatedly. This measure would update for inflation the fine levels for repeated violations, while continuing to keep the initial fine lower...Further, the bill establishes a hardship waiver process for repeated violators who have made a bona fide effort to comply with the first violation and payment of the additional fines would create an undue financial hardship."

- 10) **Arguments in Opposition.** None on file.

Analysis Prepared by: Angela Mapp / L. GOV. / (916) 319-3958

FN: 0002699

BUDGET FACT SHEET

Senior Hunger – A Policy Embarrassment

REQUEST

Provide an additional \$17 million to increase funding for senior nutrition programs. The added dollars would provide for an extra 2 million meals per year, and serve over 12,500 more older Californians.

HUNGER AMONG OLDER ADULTS IS A POLICY EMBARRASMENT

Over the last ten years, the percentage of the senior population age 60 and older that faces food insecurity has increased by 45% (Ziliak & Gunderson, 2015). Incredibly, studies show that the percent of older adults in California facing the threat of hunger is 16.33%. California has the eleventh highest rate of senior food insecurity in the nation (United Heath Foundation, 2015).

Food insecurity is linked to poor health status (Stuff et al, 2004) and malnutrition. Malnutrition can lead to loss of weight and strength, greater susceptibility to disease, confusion, diabetes, osteoporosis, stroke, and cancer (World Health Organization, 2015). Malnutrition also leads to increased visits to emergency rooms, increased lengths of hospital days, and discharges to higher levels of care (Charlton et al, 2012).

HUNGER NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED

California is home to some 7.8 million older adults (California State Plan on Aging 2017-2021). In California, the percent of older persons facing the threat of hunger is 16.33 %. Subsequently, nearly 1.274 million adults over the age of 60 are considered food insecure.

No one in California should go hungry, especially our parents and grandparents. Forty percent of older Californians do not have sufficient incomes to make ends meet. About 50% of older persons suffer from malnutrition. Over one million are threatened by hunger each day. It is essential to provide a safety net of preventive nutrition that enables older adults to age well.

THE BASICS OF SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Nutrition programs serve numerous seniors through home delivered meals and congregate sites. Congregate sites reach out to low-income persons, those seeking social programs as well as the hidden homeless in the streets or in cars. Home delivered meal programs focuses on the home-bound, socially isolated, and most needy.

Home delivered meals are provided to older adults who are shut in and unable to get out of the house to go to a meal site. These seniors tend to be older, poorer and have multiple chronic conditions and suffer from isolation and loneliness. Nearly 11 million home-delivered meals are served annually - providing life-sustaining nutrition for some 55,000 older, frail Californians. Total cost of home delivered meals is about \$79 million with federal and state dollars of nearly \$39 million. On average, a recipient of home delivered meals receives 4 meals a week.

Congregate meals provide an opportunity for socialization (critical to health and well-being) and connection to community resources and social programs for those who attend. Congregate meals are provided in communal settings at various community-based sites. The positive impact of congregate meal programs is especially evident among the low-income respondents and those living alone. Approximately 7 million congregate meals are served every year to some 168,000 recipients. Total cost of the congregate meal program is about \$98.6 million with federal and state dollars contributing some \$54 million.

INCREASING NEED AMID FLAT FUNDING

Resolving the problem of 1.274 million older adults facing food insecurity is an enormous task. The task grows bigger considering that funding for nutrition has not been adjusted for the past 8 years.

Although approximately 223,000 seniors receive meals each year, over 1.051 million older Californians still face hunger every day. Attempting to feed those seniors not currently receiving meals would cost a whopping \$1.39 billion per year.

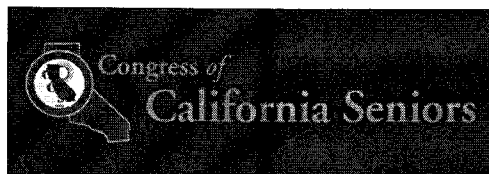
California can provide aggressive leadership in battling senior hunger by augmenting existing programs with an additional \$17 million for senior nutrition programs. These added dollars would provide for an additional 2 million meals per year, and serve over 12,500 new seniors with an average of three times per week for about \$8.50 per meal.

STATE FUNDING IS A CRITICAL PIECE OF A REAL SOLUTION

Home-delivered Meals and Congregate Dining Centers provide real solutions to two key issues facing seniors; they combat hunger and food insecurity, and have the added advantage of reducing loneliness and isolation.

California's leadership can provide the momentum for local communities, private individuals and foundations to join forces in this battle and augment the state funding with additional resources to address this overwhelming crisis. Socially isolated seniors are often silent and even invisible to the general public, but their lack of visibility does not end their hunger. Nutritious meals improve health and sustain life. Food is easier to provide and more cost-effective than hospitalizations or placement in a skilled nursing facility, and improves the quality of life for our older adults and their children and grandchildren. A budget augmentation to Senior Nutrition Programs will send a clear message that California prioritizes promoting health and well-being for all ages, rather than hospitalization, institutionalization, or other drastic and more costly interventions.

The budget request is co-sponsored by the California Association of Area Agencies on Aging, California Commission on Aging, and the Congress of California Seniors. It is supported by numerous aging organizations, including Meals on Wheels California, and the California Collaborative for LTSS.



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