

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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August 7, 2024

The Honorable Laphonza Butler
United States Senate
G10 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable David Valadao
United States House of Representatives
2465 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Alex Padilla
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Vince Fong
United States House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jay Obernolte
United States House of Representatives
1029 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Adult Protective Services and Long-Term Care Ombudsman Funding in FY25 - SUPPORT

Honorable Members of the Kern Congressional Delegation,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to urge Congress to support Adult Protective Services (APS) and Long-Term Care Ombudsman program (LTCOP) funding in the fiscal year 2025 budgeting process.

Specifically, we urge congress to provide at least \$100 million for APS program formula grants and \$50 million for the LTCOP in any final bipartisan appropriations legislation. Previous funding levels provided APS programs with \$188 million. The current funding bills from both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees provided only \$21.7 million for LTCOP and \$0 in specific APS funding. Previous funding levels have allowed APS programs to bolster capacity, staffing, and services as the number and complexity of elder abuse reports increases. While the FY25 ask is a more modest funding request compared to pandemic-level funding for the programs, cutting funding to the currently proposed levels would turn a blind eye to this critical issue. In fact, in 2021, over 1.34 million reports of elder abuse were made nationally to APS programs.

It is essential to our national effort to provide adequate funding for APS programs to combat abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults and people with disabilities. The funding level currently in progress would result in 16 states receiving a paltry \$103,721. An increase is needed to sustain

services and maintain capacity. This is not the time to weaken our efforts to combat the sinister force of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults and people with disabilities in America.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors wishes to elevate awareness about the important day-to-day work that both APS and Ombudsman do to help victims of elder abuse and prevent victimization. Elder abuse remains a real and present danger to too many older adults. Congress must provide meaningful funding to address it, and we respectfully request your support in this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Couch', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

David Couch, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, California Congressional Delegation
National Association of Counties
Elder Justice Coalition
Kern County Aging and Adult Services
Carpi & Clay