



County Administrative Office
Governmental & Legislative Affairs

Josh Candelaria
Director

April 7, 2016

The Honorable Tony Thurmond
Chair, Assembly Health and Human Services Budget Subcommittee 1
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Long-Term Care Ombudsman Funding

Dear Chairman Thurmond:

The County of San Bernardino respectfully requests your consideration and support of a budget item to increase funding for the Long Term Care (LTC) Ombudsman program to serve institutionalized aged and disabled individuals. Specifically, we request your consideration to provide a \$3.6 million budget increase to the LTC Ombudsman program.

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program funding is used to provide advocacy services on behalf of residents residing in licensed long-term care facilities such as skilled nursing homes and residential care facilities. Ombudsmen monitor and investigate quality of life and quality of care issues, witness advanced health care directives in skilled nursing facilities, participate in resident and family councils, and collaborate with licensing and regulatory agencies.

Funding for the program is dismal. In the County of San Bernardino, the largest geographic county in the nation, there are less than 4 full-time paid staff in the LTC Ombudsman program, which is mainly supported by volunteers who help ensure that mandated advocacy and complaint investigation services are enforced.

California's over age 65 population is projected to grow significantly, increasing from 4.3 million in 2010 to 6.3 million by 2020 and will double to 8.6 million by 2030. The oldest demographic, over 85, will grow by over 71 percent between 2010 and 2030.

As the number of older adults who transition from living at home to assisted living or skilled nursing facilities rises, the LTC program is challenged with meeting the needs of these residents including but not limited to: quality of care, safety, resident rights, and protection from physical, financial and other forms of abuse.

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For these reasons, the County of San Bernardino urges your support for \$3.6 million to strengthen the LTC Ombudsman program. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Josh Candelaria, Director of Governmental and Legislative Affairs at (909) 387-4821 or jcandelaria@sbcountry.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Ramos', with a stylized flourish at the end.

JAMES RAMOS
Board of Supervisors Chairman
Third District Supervisor
County of San Bernardino

c: Members and Consultants, Health and Human Services Budget Subcommittee 1
County of San Bernardino Legislative Delegation