

**Contra Costa County
Advisory Council on Aging**



**Legislative Workgroup
Tuesday, April 13, 2021 • 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.**

Join Zoom link: <https://cccouny-us.zoom.us/j/84176318298?pwd=MFBRaEtUL2pXTFQ0dkSyZkEvRGcxZD09>

Password: 374781 Telephone: USA 214 765 0478 USA 8882780254 (US Toll Free) Conference code: 445291

AGENDA

9:30 Welcome and Announcements – Shirley Krohn, Chair
Introduce workgroup Staff Assitant- Melanie Smith

Approve Today's Agenda –
Approve March 2021 minutes -

Note: *Members report on research they have done since last months meeting.
Discussion on their decisions to “support” “oppose” or “watch”*

Update from last meeting discussions

Aging & Long Term Care Committee Hearing- Shirley Krohn

Review: support letters for AB 523, AB 540 and SB107

Public Comment

11:30 Adjourn

Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging is appointed by the Board of Supervisors to advise the Area Agency on Aging on all matters related to the development and administration of the annual Area Agency Plan and operations conducted thereunder, in accordance with mandates from the Older Americans Act. Any comments or recommendations made by the council or its individual members do not represent the official position of the County or any of its officers.

The Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging and its committees will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disability planning to attend the above noticed meeting if they call Anthony Macias at 925 602-4175 at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

DATE:

The Honorable Cottie Petrie-Norris
Member, California State Assembly

Re: AB 540 (Petrie-Norris): Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly

Dear Assembly Member Petrie-Norris:

The Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging supports your bill, AB 540. This bill aligns with Goal Two of the State's Master Plan on Aging, Health Reimagined, which our Agency for Adult and Aging services is exploring how to implement locally with the help of our Council, community-based partners and public health resources. Any comments, recommendations, opinions and positions made by the Council or its members do not represent the official position of the County or its officers.

PACE programs coordinate and deliver preventive, primary, acute and long-term care services exclusively to frail older adults who might otherwise be in nursing homes so they can continue to live independently in their communities. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) have deemed PACE to be the gold standard of care for older adults. Contra Costa County seniors and our families are fortunate to have a PACE provider, Center for Elders' Independence, opening a PACE Center in Concord in 2021.

Even though PACE is a model of care exclusively for frail seniors, many beneficiaries are unaware of PACE and how it may benefit them. AB 540 will improve awareness and expand our opportunities for choosing the best care possible for ourselves and loved ones by:

- Requiring PACE to be identified as a Medicare and offered as a Medi-Cal plan choice and included in all enrollment materials and information,
- Requiring the Department of Health Care Services to establish an auto referral process to PACE,
- Requiring assessment processes to include PACE criteria and refer to PACE if eligible
- Exempting Medi-Cal beneficiaries who are enrolled in PACE from mandatory or passive enrollment in Medi-Cal managed care.

The Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging supports AB 540 so that more high-quality affordable healthcare and social services are available to enable more of our frail elders to remain living at home in our communities for as long as possible.

Sincerely,

James Donnelly
President
Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging

DATE:

Re: SB 107 (Wiener): CalFresh – Simpler for Seniors

Dear Senator Wiener:

The Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging (ACOA) consists of members who are older adult residents of this County. The ACOA advises our Board of Supervisors on matters associated with the planning, development, and administration of programs relating to older adults. Any comments, recommendations, opinion, and positions made by the Council or its members do not represent the official position of the county or its officers.

We want to acknowledge and thank you for introducing SB 107: CalFresh. We recognize that this Bill will enable CalFresh applicants to have access to a much-needed process for applying for this important program. We also understand that 30% of eligible Californians are not enrolled in CalFresh, which means that our state misses more than \$2 billion in federal funding for nutrition benefits. This is a horrific example of a great loss of one of the most effective economic stimulus programs in the country.

It is extremely unfortunate that only 19% of eligible older Californians (age 60+) receive CalFresh, due to the barriers to applying for benefits. This bill will streamline the application process by creating a simple, short simplified application for those in the most vulnerable households. It would also increase access by ensuring that submitting an application over the phone is possible in all counties throughout the State.

Food insecurity is a huge problem in our State as it creates nutrition issues that affects older adults and people with disabilities. The COVID-19 pandemic has only been heightened this fact. This bill will increase access to much-needed food assistance to a population that needs it most.

We thank you for introducing this critically important legislation.

Respectfully,

Janes Donnelly
President
Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging

DATE:

The Honorable Adrin Nazarian
Chair, Assembly Aging and Long-Term Care Committee

Re: AB 523 (Nazarian): Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly

Dear Assembly Member Nazarian:

The Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging supports your bill, AB 540. Any comments, recommendations, opinions and positions made by the Council or its members do not represent the official position of the County or its officers. The bill aligns with Goal Two of the State's Master Plan on Aging, Health Reimagined, which our Agency for Adult and Aging services is exploring how to implement locally with the help of our Council, community-based partners and public health resources.

PACE programs coordinate and deliver preventive, primary, acute and long-term care services exclusively to frail older adults who might otherwise be in nursing homes so they can continue to live independently in their communities. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) have deemed PACE to be the gold standard of care for older adults. Contra Costa County seniors and our families are fortunate to have a PACE provider, Center for Elders' Independence, opening a PACE Center in Concord in 2021.

At the onset of the COVID-19, pandemic Center for Elders' Independence was able to change how to provide PACE services to 850 frail elders participants so they could safely shelter in place at home with additional flexibility allowed by the State Department of Health Care Services and CMS. During the public health emergency (as of 2/28/2021), Center for Elders' Independence was able to continue enrolling elders into PACE and avoided nursing home placement for 172 individuals most vulnerable to the Coronavirus.

California PACE organizations are now asking for consent to incorporate these more flexible practices into our PACE model permanently. We heartily support AB 523 to make permanent the regulatory flexibilities provided to PACE organizations during the COVID-19 public health emergency that have allowed PACE organizations to safely care for and provide services to the frail seniors that PACE organizations serve.

For the reasons outlined above, Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging supports AB 523.

Sincerely,

James Donnelly
President
Contra Costa County Advisory Council on Aging