

November 3, 2021

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leaders Schumer and McConnell and Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy,

The undersigned organizations are writing to express our strong support for the major investment in Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) included in the Build Back Better Act legislative framework. We applaud your continued commitment to building a sustainable HCBS infrastructure that can begin to address the magnitude of need in our communities, by both increasing access to Medicaid HCBS and creating more and better direct care jobs to support people with disabilities and aging adults.

This funding would be the largest investment in HCBS since the Medicaid program began. Not only is it historic, but it is long overdue. The vast majority of both aging adults and people with disabilities want to live at home, yet many face barriers to getting the support they need to do so. The HCBS workforce provides vital services, and yet these workers—who are primarily women of color—have been devalued and underpaid for decades. Long-standing staffing shortages, which the pandemic exacerbated, create gaps in service availability, lengthy waiting lists, service line closures, and additional obstacles to achieving a high quality of life for workers, recipients, and their families. The costs of this inadequate system fall disproportionately on people of color with limited income and wealth.

The level of investment in the Build Back Better framework will be transformational. It will directly improve the lives of millions of aging adults and people with disabilities and the people who care for them. It will improve access to HCBS, decrease waiting lists and help address inequities across states; increase compensation for the direct care workforce and create better jobs; provide relief for families and allow over one million family caregivers to return to the paid workforce. It will be cost-effective for states to shift spending from more expensive institutional care, and it will strengthen our economy. It is no wonder why [85% of registered voters support](#) this investment in Medicaid HCBS.

Not only is this policy enormously popular, it is economically sound. One hundred of our nation's leading economists and public policy scholars issued an [open letter](#) declaring that investments in HCBS make economic sense for our country and our families. They cited a recent analysis from [Moody's analytics](#) that found that investing in HCBS "has a near-term benefit in the economic recovery with an economic multiplier greater than one, meaning that every dollar spent boosts the recovery by more than a dollar. Longer-term, the analysis estimates higher economic growth by boosting the employment of family caregivers."

We thank you for your leadership and ask you to ensure the funding for HCBS in the Build Back Better Act is as robust as possible. We look forward to our continued partnership to swiftly pass this transformational investment in Medicaid HCBS into law. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Amber Christ, achrist@justiceinaging.org.

Sincerely,

AARP

ACLU

Aging Services Collaborative of Santa Clara County

Alliance for Leadership and Education

Alliance for Retired Americans

Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss

Altarum Institute

Alzheimer's Association

Alzheimer's Impact Movement

Alzheimer's Los Angeles

American Association of Service Coordinators

American Council of the Blind (ACB) Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss

American Geriatrics Society

American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR)

American Society on Aging

Asset Building Strategies

Association of California Caregiver Resource Centers

Association of Jewish Aging Services

Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)

Autism Society of America

Autistic Self Advocacy Network

Be a Hero

California Association of Public Authorities for IHSS

California Disability Services Association

California Foundation for Independent Living Centers

Caring Across Generations

Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Choice in Aging

Coalition on Human Needs

Community Access Center

Community Catalyst

Community Change Action
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Disability Rights California
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
Disability Rights New Jersey
Diverse Elders Coalition
Epilepsy Foundation
Families USA
Family Caregiver Alliance/National Center on Caregiving
Gulf Coast ADAPT
Hispanic Federation
Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles
Justice in Aging
Law Office of Gerald T. Richards
LEAD Coalition (Leaders Engaged on Alzheimer's Disease)
LeadingAge
LIFE ElderCare
LifeLong Medical Care
LifeTime Resources, Inc.
Lutheran Services in America
Main Street Alliance
Medicare Rights Center
MomsRising
Multipurpose Senior Services Program Site Association
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys
National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA)
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Association for Home Care and Hospice
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
National Association of State Long Term Care Ombudsman Programs (NASOP)
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care
National Council on Aging
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Employment Law Project

National Health Law Program
National Indian Council on Aging
National Senior Corps Association
National Women's Law Center
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
Oklahoma Silver Haired Legislature
Partners in Care Foundation
Peninsula Family Service
Pennsylvania Council of the Blind
PHI
Protect Our Care
Putnam Independent Living Service
QG Premium
RESULTS
SEIU
Silicon Valley Independent Living Center
St. Barnabas Senior Services
The AIDS Institute
The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)
The Arc of the United States
The Gerontological Society of America
The Jewish Federations of North America
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
TIME'S UP NOW
UDW/AFSCME Local 3930
Union for Reform Judaism
USAging (formerly n4a)
Warren County Senior Center
Yolo Healthy Aging Alliance