The 2023-24 Budget Must End Poverty for 1.2 Million Living on SSI/SSP

We ask the Legislature to enact the vision outlined in the Master Plan for Aging to End Poverty for SSI recipients and ensure they live with dignity:

California’s older adults and people with disabilities on SSI have held jobs, provided caregiving to children and elders, continue to make valuable contributions to society, and have dreams for the future. Due to gender and racial discrimination, most SSI recipients are women and people of color. The COVID-19 Pandemic has exacerbated these injustices. Enacting these budget asks allows recipients to reach economic self-sufficiency, rise above the poverty level, and live with dignity.

1. Restore all SSP grants to above federal poverty level and Establish grants at the Elder Economic Index, setting a minimum level for a dignified life.
   While Great Recession era grant cuts were fully restored in the 2022-23 budget, grants are still below the poverty level. In many counties, the grant will not cover the cost of a studio apartment. For those who can obtain below-market rent, grants cannot provide for utilities, food, medicine, toiletries, clothing and other necessities, pushing people into homelessness and hunger. We must restore all SSP grants to at least the Supplemental Poverty Measure as a down payment to the Elder Economic Security Index which reflects the true cost of living for SSI/SSP recipients.

2. Ensure that a state COLA is provided next year and every year going forward.
   The pandemic has reinstated why grants need to keep up with the cost of living, as cost of food continues to rise and hunger remains at record levels causing grants to decrease in purchasing power over the years. We ask that the 2023-24 budget ensure that a state COLA is provided next year and every year going forward.

3. Reinstate and re-fund WIC 12550 to provide for Special Circumstances for SSI/SSP recipients:
   It has been over twenty years since recipients have received an annual allotment through WIC 12550 to cover funds for special circumstances such as to purchase, repair, and replace essential household items needed to support a healthy living environment. We ask that the 2023-2024 budget reinstate and refund WIC 12550.

4. Ensure Parity in SNB and TNB to SNAP’s Thrifty Food Plan Increase
   The CalFresh Expansion for SSI/SSP recipients has been a strong success and we must continue to fulfill the “hold harmless” goals of the Supplemental Nutrition Benefits (SNB) & Transitional Nutrition Benefit (TNB) programs. The USDA released the re-evaluation of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP), which is used to calculate SNAP/CalFresh benefits and is based on factors needed to eat a balanced diet. As of October, 1, 2021, CalFresh participants are receiving an average maximum $36 per month increase in benefits per person. Households receiving SNB and TNB should receive an increase in benefits that is equivalent to the respective improvements by household size in CalFresh due to the Thrifty Food Plan update.

Californians for SSI (CA4SSI) is a statewide coalition of over 200 organizations across the aging, disability rights, housing and homeless, anti-hunger and anti-poverty sectors. CA4SSI seeks to ensure that blind, aged, and people living with disabilities living on SSI/SSP obtain adequate support to lead their lives with dignity.

@CA4SSI • Californians for SSI • ca4ssi.org
**CA4SSI Statewide Organizational Endorsers**

AARP, ACLU California, AllCare Alliance, The ARC CA, California Association of Food Banks, California Alliance for Retired Americans, California Association of Public Authorities for IHSS, California Church IMPACT, California Council of the Blind, California Emergency Foodlink, California Food Policy Advocates, California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, California IHSS Consumer Alliance, California Partnership, California Senior Legislature, Californians for Disability Rights, CLUE: Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, Community Services Unlimited Inc., County Welfare Directors Association of CA, Courage Campaign, Disability Rights California, Educate Advocate, Food Chain Workers Alliance, Housing California, IHSS Consumers Union, Insight Center, Jewish Public Affairs Committee of California, Justice in Aging, Lutheran Office of Public Policy — California, Magnolia Women's Recovery Center, Meals on Wheels California, National Association of Social Workers/CA Chapter, National Center for Lesbian Rights, Produce Good, SEIU, UD/W/AFSCME Local 3930, Western Center on Law and Poverty

**Bay Area**


**Central Valley**

Central California Food Bank, Community Action Partnership of Kern County, Disability Resource Agency for Independent Living, FoodLink for Tulare County, Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission, Kern County Independent Living Center, Neighborhood Industries, Second Harvest Food Bank of San Joaquin & Stanislaus Counties

**Los Angeles / Southern California**

ACLU of Southern California, Adams Vermont/Gardena CFMS, Center for Health Care Rights, Clergy Caucus of Inland Congregations United for Change, Communities Actively Living Independent & Free, Community Action Agency, Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino, Dayle McIntosh Center, Educate, Advocate., Disabled Resources Center, Inc., Downtown Women's Center, Fair Trade LA, Feeding America Riverside-San Bernardino Counties, FIND Food Bank, Food Bank Coalition of San Luis Obispo County, Foodbank of Santa Barbara County, Food & Water Watch, Friends Across The Line, Friends In Deed, Guerrilla Food Not Bombs, Homeless Action Center, Homeless Health Care Los Angeles, Hunger Action LA, Huntington Hospital Senior Care Network, Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles, Jewish Labor Committee Western Region, John Tennant Memorial- Episcopal Senior Communities, Latino Diabetes Association, Latino and Latina Roundtable of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley, Los Angeles Aging Advocacy Coalition, Los Angeles Community Action Network, Los Angeles for a New Economy, Los Angeles Regional Food Bank, Orange County Food Access Coalition, MLK Coalition of Greater Los Angeles, Orange County Food Bank, Orange County Hunger Coalition, Personal Assistance Services Council of LA County, Project Angel Food, Prototypes, Retirement Housing Foundation, Santa Barbara Food Alliance, Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County, SEIU Local 721, Service Center for Independent Life, Social Justice Learning Institute, Southern CA Resource Services for Independent Living, Starting Over, Inc., St. Barnabas Senior Services, Thai Community Development Center, The East Los Angeles Community Union, Time for Change Foundation, Urban & Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental College, VELA, Veterans For Peace Los Angeles, Westside Center for Independent Living, WORKS (Women Organizing Resources, Knowledge & Services), Youth Justice Coalition

**Sacramento/Northern California**

2-1-1 Humboldt, Area 1 Agency on Aging, California Emergency Foodlink, Capitol People First, Cottage Housing Inc., DOGFITE (Disability Organizing Group for Initiating Total Equality), Food for People, Inc., Ford Street Project, Life Support Alliance, Humboldt Area Center for Harm Reduction, Mary Immaculate Residential Facility, Mendocino Food & Nutrition Program, Placer Food Bank, Placer Independent Resource Services, River City Food Bank, Sacramento Housing Alliance, Resources for Independent Living-Sacramento, Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services, Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, Sacramento Loaves & Fishes, Sacramento Regional Coalition to End Homelessness, The Resource Connection Food Bank, Yolo County Commission on Aging and Adult Services, Yolo Food Bank, Yolo Healthy Aging Alliance, Yuba-Sutter Gleaners Food Bank Inc.

**San Diego**