



June 13, 2019

The Honorable Ash Kalra
State Capitol, Room 2196
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 50 (Kalra) – Support As-Is and With Amendment for Regional Reimbursement Rates

Dear Assemblymember Kalra:

The California Collaborative for Long Term Services and Supports (CCLTSS) is comprised of 39 statewide aging and disability organizations that promote dignity, health and independence in community living. Our members include advocates, providers, labor, and health insurers, and collectively we represent millions of California seniors and people with disabilities, their caregivers, and those who provide health, human services, and housing.

The Collaborative has a position of SUPPORT AS-IS AND WITH AMENDMENT on AB 50, which, as you know, requires the California Department of Health Care Services to submit a request for renewal of its Assisted Living Waiver.

The Assisted Living Waiver has been in effect for 10 years and is due for renewal. The waiver allows for the provision of specified home and community-based services to individuals who are eligible for the Medi-Cal program and whose needs are significant enough that they would otherwise qualify for care in an institution such as a hospital, nursing facility or Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID). In order to participate, qualified individuals are asked to voluntarily select

receipt of these waiver services in lieu of institutionalization. The services can be provided in Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly (RCFEs) or in public housing. Currently, 15 counties participate in the waiver, and the number of participants is capped at 5,500. AB 50 would require the request for renewal to include a phased-in increase in the number of participants from 5,500 to 18,500 and expansion of the program beyond the initial 15 counties, on a regional basis.

As California's population ages and our housing affordability crisis continues to grow, providing alternatives to institutionalization for Californians who would otherwise need such a level of care is critical to ensuring a continuum of available services and living arrangements throughout the state. However, the cost of providing assisted living varies significantly across the state. In order to make use of the expanded Assisted Living Waiver slots, we support an amendment that would require the California Department of Health Care services to modify its reimbursement rates to account for regional differences in the costs of providing care.

For these reasons, The California Collaborative has a position of SUPPORT AS-IS AND WITH AMENDMENT on AB 50. Please don't hesitate to contact me at achrist@justiceinaging.org, whenever I or the Collaborative can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amber C. Christ". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Amber" being the most prominent part.

Amber C. Christ, JD, *Vice Chair for Policy*
California Collaborative for Long Term Services and Supports
Directing Attorney, Justice in Aging