



## **CALIFORNIA COLLABORATIVE FOR LONG-TERM SERVICES & SUPPORTS (CCLTSS)**

June 22, 2018

**Re: REQUESTING YOUR SUPPORT AND SPONSORSHIP FOR THE EMPOWER CARE ACT (H.R. 5306 / S. 2227)**

To the Honorable Members of the California Congressional Delegation:

The California Collaborative for Long Term Services and Supports is comprised of 38 statewide aging and disability organizations that promote dignity and independence in long-term 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.

We are writing to ask you to sponsor and support the EMPOWER Care Act (H.R. 5306 / S. 2227), legislation that is crucial to maintaining support for cost-effective long-term services and supports that allow older adults and people with disabilities to transition from costly institutional settings and live better lives in community-based settings.

The EMPOWER Care Act extends and improves the recently expired Money Follows the Person demonstration, which helps transition people out of nursing homes or other institutional settings and move back to the community. Since 2005 the program has assisted over 75,000 Americans to transition out of institutional settings, while also achieving savings in state Medicaid programs.

Independent evaluation by Mathematica Policy Research<sup>1</sup> suggests that after individuals transition to the community, their overall Medicare and Medicaid expenditures decrease by about 23%.

The final report to Congress evaluating the Money Follows the Person Rebalancing Demonstration illustrates the value of the program and the importance of maintaining these crucial services by supporting the EMPOWER Care Act:

- Grantee states “have made considerable progress” during demonstration years (2008 – 2015).<sup>2</sup>
- “MFP participants transitioned through 2013 generated \$978 million in reduced Medicaid and Medicare costs during the first year after the transition to home- and community-based long-term services and supports.”<sup>3</sup>
- “MFP has been the catalyst to interagency collaboration between health and housing to help individuals in institutions to locate and secure affordable and accessible housing, a key achievement of this demonstration.”<sup>4</sup>
- “Quality of care indicators suggest MFP participants are less likely to be readmitted to institutional care during the first year after transition.”<sup>5</sup>

Finally, and most importantly, the program achieves these cost-savings and systemic improvements by increasing the quality of life of participants, with *participants experiencing increases across all seven quality-of-life domains measured, with these improvements sustained for two-years after transition from*

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<sup>1</sup> All of Mathematica’s MFP evaluations may be found at: <https://www.mathematica-mpr.com/our-publications-and-findings/projects/research-and-evaluation-of-the-money-follows-the-person-mfp-demonstration-grants>.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, (2017), *Report to the President and Congress: The Money Follows the Person (MFP) Rebalancing Demonstration*. Washington, D.C., p. 9. Retrieved on 6-22-18 from <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/ltss/downloads/money-follows-the-person/mfp-rtc.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, pp. 16-17.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, pp. 22

*an institution.*<sup>6</sup>

As the population of California seniors and people with disabilities continues to increase, it is essential to make investments in cost-effective long-term services and supports to meet these populations' needs. We urge our Representatives to sponsor and support the EMPOWER Care Act to continue this important program that saves money in the Medicaid program while improving the lives of some of California's most vulnerable residents.

We respectfully ask for your support for the EMPOWER Care Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurel A. Mildred".

Laurel Mildred, MSW  
For the California Collaborative  
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<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 23