

## CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

CSA1 Bill Id:AB 1476 Author:(Wallis)

As Amended Ver:August 29, 2025

Majority vote

**SUMMARY**

Requires the McCarthy Kennick Nutrition Program for the Elderly Act of 1971 (Nutrition Program Act) to include the establishment of projects that would provide, at least five days a week, at least one meal per day and any additional meals the contracting agency or organization may elect to provide for individuals 60 years of age or older.

**Senate Amendments**

Requires the meal provided be served in an in-person setting or provided for to-go pickup to be consumed in a virtual congregate setting.

**COMMENTS**

*Background:* California's aging population is growing faster than any other age group. By 2030, over 25 percent of the population in California will be 60 and older.<sup>1</sup> California is projected to be one of the fastest growing States in the nation in total population. In 2016, California comprised 12 percent of the nation's population<sup>2</sup> and is expected to grow 30 percent by the year 2060 (an increase of 11.7 million people).<sup>3</sup> In California, the population aged 60 years and over is expected to grow more than three times as fast as the total population and this growth will vary by region.

*Nutrition data:* According to the California Older Americans Act: State Plan on Aging 2021-2025, Older Americans Act Core Programs Supportive Services (Title III C) provide nutrition services through two programs.<sup>4</sup>

**Congregate Nutrition (Title III C-1)** This program provides meals to older adults at senior centers and other locations throughout the state. In addition to meals, the program provides nutrition education, nutrition risk screening, and, in some cases, nutrition counseling.

**Home-Delivered Nutrition (Title III C-2)** The Home-Delivered Nutrition Program provides nutritious meals, nutrition education, and nutrition risk screening to people 60 and over who are homebound due to illness or disability or who are otherwise isolated.

Administration for Community Living (ACL) has finalized updates to the regulations (also known as the final rule) for its OAA programs. The final rule went into effect on March 15, 2024, and has a compliance date of October 1, 2025. These updates included changes related to OAA Nutrition Regulations Title III, Grab-and-Go Meals using both C-1 and C-2 funds.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Projections | Department of Finance (ca.gov)

<sup>2</sup> <https://factfinder.census.gov>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Projections>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.aging.ca.gov/download.ashx?IE0rcNUV0zZW4jD5nrNRAA%3D%3D>

<sup>5</sup> [https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/2025-01/OAAregs\\_TitleIII\\_Grab-and-GoMeals\\_ACL.pdf](https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/2025-01/OAAregs_TitleIII_Grab-and-GoMeals_ACL.pdf)

A White House press release stated on March 27, 2025 a restructuring of the federal Health and Human Services Agency, a coordinating factsheet states "The critical programs within the ACL that support older adults and people of all ages with disabilities will be split across the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)."<sup>6</sup> It is unclear at this time if ACL regulations will continue.

According to a recent report by Feeding America, food insecurity has negative effects for individuals across the age spectrum, but particularly for seniors and older adults; these effects can be particularly problematic given the unique health, economic, mobility and nutritional challenges that can come with aging.

Having a disability is strongly associated with food insecurity. Seniors with a disability had food insecurity rates over twice as high as seniors without disabilities (13.4% compared to 5.0%). For older adults, the disparity is even greater. Older adults with disabilities had food insecurity rates more than three times as high as older adults without disabilities (26.1% compared to 7.2%).

Extensive work has studied the connection between food insecurity, nutrition, and chronic health conditions. Findings from the 1999-2016 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (published as part of the 2021 release *The State of Senior Hunger*) showed that food insecure seniors and older adults consume lower quantities of key nutrients such as iron and protein and are more likely to have chronic health conditions such as depression and limitations in daily activity.<sup>7</sup>

A recent CDC study<sup>8</sup> showed food insecurity interacts with chronic conditions. The study observed higher health care costs in the presence of this interaction for those who were food insecure and had poor health than for those who were food secure. The prevalence of food insecurity and chronic health conditions among older adults is a public health concern.

Meals on Wheels released an analysis of 38 selected studies and found a link between receiving nutrition services and experiencing the following primary health and well-being outcomes:<sup>9</sup>

- 1) Reduced use of costly health care services.
- 2) Reduced nursing home use and increased ability to age in place.
- 3) Reduced health care costs attributed to reduced hospital and nursing home spending.
- 4) Increased food security.
- 5) Improved diet quality.

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<sup>6</sup> Fact Sheet: HHS' Transformation to Make America Healthy Again | HHS.gov

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.feedingamerica.org/research/state-senior-hunger>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2018/18\\_0058.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2018/18_0058.htm)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/learn-more/research/the-case-for-meals-on-wheels-sept23>

- 6) Reduced or slowed decline in nutritional risk.
- 7) Reduced social isolation and loneliness.
- 8) Reduced falls and increased home safety.

*Master Plan for Aging:* In January of 2021, the Governor released his Master Plan for Aging (MPA). The MPA prioritizes the health and well-being of older Californians and the need for policies that promote healthy aging. The MPA serves as a blueprint for state government, local government, the private sector, and philanthropy to prepare the state for the coming demographic changes and continue California's leadership in aging, disability, and equity.

In 2025-26, the MPA outlines five bold goals and currently seeks to advance 81 initiatives to build a California for All Ages by 2030. AB 1476 can be linked to Goals Two, Three and Five of the five bold goals:

- 1) Goal One: Housing for All Ages and Stages
- 2) Goal Two: Health Reimagined
- 3) Goal Three: Inclusion and Equity, Not Isolation
- 4) Goal Four: Caregiving That Works
- 5) Goal Five: Affording Aging

### **According to the Author**

"Rising food costs are making it increasingly difficult for seniors to access the nutritious meals they need to maintain their health and well-being. Many older adults live on fixed incomes, and higher grocery prices can force tough choices between food, medicine and other essential expenses. Addressing food insecurity is essential to ensure healthy, balanced meals to support our seniors. This bill will take the lessons we learned during COVID-19 and improve quality of life for seniors struggling with food insecurity."

### **Arguments in Support**

The League of California cities writes in support "During the pandemic, cities across California began offering seniors the option to pick up meals rather than receive them in a congregate setting. This proved to be successful, with increased enrollment even after the end of the COVID-era restrictions. Allowing meals to be available for pickup has not inhibited cities' efforts to continue to connect with older adults. In fact, this added flexibility has expanded the reach of these programs to individuals who previously were not receiving these vital services and supports. Cal Cities supports increased access to healthy and affordable food in communities across the state. Allowing cities to provide to-go meal options allows for increased flexibility and is a meaningful step forward in addressing food insecurity and hunger among our communities' most vulnerable residents."

The Alzheimer's Association writes in further support "Proper nutrition is vital to keep the body and mind healthy. For a person with Alzheimer's or dementia, poor nutrition may increase behavioral symptoms and cause weight loss. A decrease in appetite and weight may become a concern as the disease progresses. Although, during the middle stage, it is important to promote a

person with dementia's independence during meals. AB 1476 provides optionality for how older adults want to receive meals available to them, which allows them to eat at a time and place of their choosing. This provides them with the independence they deserve to receive proper nutrition in a comfortable setting. This policy supports older adults by providing options for what works best for their schedule and needs. This bill promotes healthy nutrition, which is a key factor in staving off worsening conditions."

### **Arguments in Opposition**

None on file.

### **FISCAL COMMENTS**

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, there are unknown ongoing General Fund costs, potentially ranging from the low hundreds of thousands to low millions, for Area Agencies on Aging to provide hot meals for to-go pick-up for consumption in a virtual congregate setting.

### **VOTES:**

#### **ASM AGING AND LONG-TERM CARE: 6-0-1**

**YES:** Bains, Ellis, Ahrens, Jeff Gonzalez, Blanca Rubio, Sharp-Collins

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Ávila Farías

#### **ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 14-0-1**

**YES:** Wicks, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Elhawary, Fong, Mark González, Hart, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Sanchez

#### **ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 79-0-0**

**YES:** Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

### **UPDATED**

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