



**FISCAL EFFECT:**

This bill appropriates \$1 million from the General Fund (GF) to CDA to implement the three-year pilot program in three AAAs. Anticipated costs for the program include both grant funding and administrative costs to CDA to implement and manage the program. The bill does not specify if the appropriation is to cover both.

For implementation, CDA estimates GF costs of \$626,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2027-28, and \$476,000 in FY 2028-29 and FY 2029-30. These costs include (a) one-time first year costs of \$150,000 to conduct targeted educational outreach to inform eligible individuals regarding the availability of the pilot program, and application procedures, and (b) ongoing costs of \$476,000 annually for the duration of the pilot for three additional CDA staff to develop, lead, and manage the proposed pilot program, in consultation with the AAAs. Although the pilot program ends on January 1, 2030, CDA anticipates the need to maintain the identified staffing until the end of FY 2029-30 to successfully wind down the program.

CDA estimated the above costs prior to Area 33 (Kern County) being added to the bill. An updated cost estimate may be slightly higher.

According to the Legislative Analyst's Office, the General Fund faces a structural deficit in the tens of billions of dollars over the next several fiscal years.

**COMMENTS:**1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

Wildfires continue to plague California. In the midst of this crisis, it is imperative that the state help the most vulnerable, specifically older adults and individuals with disabilities, to prepare for these wildfires. Mitigation measures have been shown to have an immense benefit not only for the homes that use them, but even for entire neighborhoods. However, our most vulnerable communities are also least able to mitigate for wildfires on their properties. By providing a grant program, [this bill] ensures older adults and individuals with disabilities can prepare their properties for fires, helping to protect them and their communities from the devastating effects of these disasters.

2) **Background.** Existing law establishes the CDA in the California Health and Human Services Agency and sets forth its mission to provide leadership to the AAAs in developing systems of home- and community-based services that maintain individuals in their own homes or the least restrictive homelike environments.

CDA administers programs serving older adults through contracts with local AAAs in 33 locations across the state to provide various services. Each county is required to have an AAA, although some AAAs represent multiple counties. AAA Planning and Service Areas 4, 29, and 33 service multiple wildfire-prone counties.

In recent years, California has experienced an increase in the frequency and severity of wildfires, and experts project these events will continue to occur. According to the California

Fire Chiefs Association (CalChiefs) and the Fire Districts Association of California (FDAC), who support the bill:

Wildfires disproportionately impact seniors and individuals with disabilities, particularly those living in moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones. Many of these residents lack the physical or financial capacity to complete critical mitigation work such as vegetation management, defensible space creation, debris removal, or basic home hardening.

This bill provides grants to seniors and individuals with disabilities who live in moderate, high, or very high fire hazard severity zones to perform wildfire mitigation activities, such as tree trimming, vegetation management, and home-hardening measures on their property.

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. This bill aligns with those priorities.

**Analysis Prepared by:** Jennifer Swenson / APPR. / (916) 319-2081