



MORE PAIN AHEAD: GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED 2012-2013 BUDGET CALLS FOR FURTHER CUTS IN IHSS

Even as UDW and other IHSS stakeholders fight through the courts to prevent a 20 percent across the board cut in IHSS already mandated in the current state budget, Gov. Jerry Brown's proposed 2012-2013 budget recommends even more cuts to the program.

Among his recommendations, the governor is reintroducing a cut he proposed last year to eliminate domestic and related services for all IHSS consumers who live with someone else (even if those they are living with are NOT their providers). This will affect approximately 300,000 IHSS consumers who would lose an average of 17 hours on top of the 23 hours that would be cut with the 20% and an earlier 3.6% cut.

UDW quickly criticized the governor's proposals, claiming that "just like his predecessor, Gov. Brown continues to try to use the IHSS program as a 'piggy bank' for budget cuts. IHSS cuts were wrong in 2008; they are just as wrong in 2012."

"We simply can no longer afford these constant attacks on IHSS," UDW Executive Director Doug Moore said. "It is time to make significant changes in how we care for our growing number of elderly and disabled citizens."

Here's UDW's complete statement:

"Gov. Brown, just like his predecessor, continues to try to use the IHSS program as a 'piggy bank' for budget cuts. IHSS cuts were wrong in 2008; they are just as wrong in 2012. His proposal to eliminate domestic and related services for all IHSS consumers who live with someone else (even if those they are living with are NOT their providers) is especially egregious. This would affect nearly 300,000 IHSS consumers, who would lose an average of 17 hours on top of the 23 hours already mandated in previous cuts.

"IHSS saves taxpayers billions of dollars over what it would cost to keep people in nursing homes. The overwhelming majority of IHSS consumers want to be cared for at home rather than in institutions Cutting IHSS will put thousands of low-wage homecare providers out of work. These budget proposals are fiscally irresponsible and morally indefensible."

"We can no longer afford these constant attacks on IHSS. It is time to make significant changes in how we care for our growing number of elderly and disabled citizens.

“Federal health care reform as well as significant trends in health care management recognize and emphasize community based care as opposed to institutional care. We must take advantage of that by streamlining and unifying long-term care management so Californians receive high quality care in a cost-effective way and we can leverage the greatest amount of support from the federal government.

“Our governor and our state should be leading the way toward a coordinated system of long-term care for our citizens. At least the Brown Administration is talking about things like realigning responsibility for IHSS from counties to the state and coordinating care for people eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid. But these discussions do not mitigate the great harm that the proposed budget cuts will bring.

“Quite simply, our goal should be to move as many people as possible out of institutions and into their homes and communities. UDW and other stakeholders are willing to work with Gov. Brown and the Legislature to bring about needed long-term care reform and stop these never-ending attacks on IHSS. Clearly the status-quo is no longer acceptable.”

(Please check back at UDW’s web site: www.udwa.org for more detailed analysis of and reaction to the IHSS budget proposal