



SF, We Need Deeply Affordable Housing Now!

Senior and Disability Action’s advocacy agenda includes the fight for deeply affordable housing. The Mayor is proposing a 500-million dollar housing bond, and SDA has been part of a working group of community stakeholders, including Board of Supervisors President Norman Yee, to demand that a portion of that bond be dedicated to deeply affordable senior housing.

What is called “affordable housing” in San Francisco is simply not affordable to most seniors or people with disabilities. Furthermore, the requirement that tenants earn 2.5 or 3 times the rent per month in order to qualify for an apartment disqualifies many from securing housing. Deeply affordable housing is for low-income seniors and people with disabilities who live on Social Security, SSI, or a small pension. While the median income for San Francisco residents is around \$90,000, the median income for seniors and people with disabilities is \$22,000. The starting rent at most below market rate units is \$1,100 or more, which leaves seniors and people with disabilities out.

As of May 15, we hear that \$90 million of the bond is proposed to be dedicated to senior housing, and we hope the final figure will be higher. At a recent budget and finance committee hearing, a homeless senior living in her van said, “I am the face of the crisis. We need truly affordable, deeply affordable senior housing now!” Upcoming hearings on this issue will be on the agenda at a future budget and finance committee hearing at the Board of Supervisors in June. Please call SDA if you are interested in attending and making your voice heard.



SDA members and allies in Sacramento supporting tenants’ rights

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SDA will be closed Monday, May 27st for Memorial Day

Happy 20th Anniversary, Olmstead!

This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the landmark Olmstead decision! In 1999, the Supreme Court decided in *Olmstead v. L.C.* that people with disabilities have a right under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to live in the community rather than institutions and that government has a responsibility to provide supports and services to make this possible.

Throughout the 1800s and 1900s, more and more people with mental health conditions and other disabilities were put into asylums, hospitals, and nursing facilities. Many institutions were overcrowded, unhealthy, and oppressive. While there was a public policy shift against psychiatric institutions, the population in nursing facilities grew to 1.4 million Americans in nursing facilities by late 2011.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed in 1990. A broad anti-discrimination law, it included recognition of the history of institutionalization in the U.S. Congress stated, “historically, society has tended to isolate and segregate individuals with disabilities, and ...continue[s] to be a serious and pervasive social problem.” The ADA included the “integration mandate,” which requires public entities to “administer services, programs, and activities in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the qualified individuals with disabilities.” This integration mandate would become the basis of the Olmstead decision in 1999.

The Olmstead lawsuit started with two women from Georgia named Lois Curtis and Elaine Wilson who had mental health conditions and intellectual disabilities. Lois is an African-American woman and Elaine was a white woman. Lois and Elaine went in and out of the state’s mental health hospitals dozens of times. After each hospital stay, they would go home, but because they did not have help at home, they would start to struggle again and would have to go back to the hospital to get help. Lois and Elaine asked the state of Georgia to help them get support in the community, and their doctors agreed that they were capable of living in the community with appropriate supports, but they waited years for those community-based supports to be set up.

A lawsuit was filed on behalf of Lois and Elaine for supports to be provided in the community. The lawsuit, known as “*Olmstead v. L.C.*” or “the Olmstead decision,” (named after the defendant who was the Georgia social services commissioner) ended up in the U.S. Supreme Court. Ruth Bader Ginsburg wrote the Court’s decision, siding with Lois and Elaine. The Court found that under the ADA, it is illegal for the state to discriminate against a person based on his or her disability. The Court said that the state discriminated against Lois and Elaine by requiring them to live in a mental health hospital. It should have instead provided services for them in the community. By confining them in the hospital, the state was segregating them. The Court said that people with disabilities have the right to receive the support they need in an integrated setting if that is what they want, if their doctors agree, and if it doesn’t fundamentally change how the state provides services to people with disabilities.

Since 1999, courts have made clear that Olmstead applies to all state and Medicaid-funded institutions, including nursing facilities, as well as to individuals living in the community who are at risk of institutionalization. Olmstead has been used repeatedly in legal cases in California to oppose cuts to In-Home Supportive Services,

Olmstead/ City Budget

Olmstead (continued from previous page)

which provides support for people with disabilities to live in their own homes. We still have a long way to go. We honor Olmstead in all the efforts to improve home care, health care, and other supports and services for people with disabilities to live in the community rather than institutions.

Thank you to the Disability Integration Project at the Atlanta Legal Aid Society, Inc. for content. <https://www.olmsteadrights.org/about-olmstead/>

Budget Justice

What do we want? Senior and disability services! When do we want them? Now! Please encourage your supervisor and the Mayor to fund critical programs for the senior and disability communities in the city budget.

Senior & disability budget asks this year include:

- Rental subsidies for seniors and people with disabilities
- Mental health care, including: services for seniors, services for long-term HIV survivors, and more community-based services tied to housing
- Dementia day care programs
- Aging & Disability Resource Centers – staff retention
- Technology – bridging the digital divide for seniors
- Senior Choirs
- Group Van Transportation
- Funding for aging in place / Village in northeast San Francisco
- Pedestrian safety improvements
- Congregate meals and home-delivered meals
- Cost of Doing Business for non-profits

Supervisor Sandy Fewer, Chair of the Budget Committee, and her aide Chelsea Boilard, are working hard to make the process more community-friendly. SDA members and allies attended the budget hearings on housing/homelessness and mental health, issues that are also SDA priorities for the year. The housing hearing highlighted the need for deeply affordable housing for seniors and people with disabilities. At the mental health hearing, the Department of Public Health was painfully unable to answer questions about wait times and availability for services. Future chances to make our voices heard will be at departmental budget hearings over the next month. To get involved in budget advocacy, please contact Ligia at ligia@sdaction.org or (415) 546-1333.

Save the date! The Public Budget Hearing – the day for public comment on all budget needs – will be on Friday, June 21, in the afternoon. (Note that this was scheduled for Saturday but had to be changed.)

Not Getting by on SSI

The Californians for SSI coalition (CA4SSI) believes that seniors and disabled people deserve better. For many years, advocates and SSI/SSP recipients have come to Sacramento to ask the legislators to correct what Governor Schwarzenegger did wrong. During the Great Recession, California balanced the budget on the backs of 1.3 million seniors and people with disabilities. SSI was cut by \$1 billion annually, plunging individual SSI recipients to just 90% of the federal poverty level. The governor never fulfilled his promise to restore the grant levels once the economy recovered.

SSI/SSP grants are so low that they cover the cost of a 1-bedroom apartment and food in only 6 of California's 58 counties—and far less than that in counties as diverse as Los Angeles and San Francisco. Eight in 10 households with low incomes (below 200% of the federal poverty line) were housing-cost burdened in 2017, and more than half of these households spent more than half their income on housing. Restoring the SSP grant cuts and Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) will help low-income seniors and people with disabilities to afford the cost of housing and meet other basic needs.

Unfortunately, Newsom's budget proposal did not include any increase in the state portion of the grant. Assembly Bill 1434 (Kalra) has been put on suspense, but the budget item asking for SSI/SSP to increase to the Federal Poverty Line is still up for consideration by the budget committee. We can advocate for this increase by contacting legislators to demand support for SSI/SSP advocates' budget request for a \$100/month increase in the SSI/SSP base grant and reinstatement of the COLA. The cost to the state is up to \$2 billion per year, which is small in comparison to money taken from the State's 1.3 million SSI/SSP recipients who have had to live at sub-poverty level for the last ten years. Their past misery cannot be erased, but the State can act to end it.

Please call:

Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon (916) 319-2063
Assembly Budget Committee Chair Phillip Ting (916) 319-2019
Assembly Budget Subcom. 1 Acting Chair Eloise Gómez-Reyes (916) 319-2047
Senate President pro Tempore Toni G. Atkins (916) 651-4039
Senate Budget Committee Chair Holly Mitchell (916) 651-4030
Senate Budget Subcommittee 3 Chair Richard Pan (916) 651-4006

Save the date! SDA's 2019 Annual Celebration is Thursday, October 3 5:30-8:00pm

Rueff Room, A.C.T.'s Strand Theater, 1127 Market Street, San Francisco

This year's theme is transformation. Together, we're transforming housing so that it's truly affordable, we are transforming mental healthcare, we're transforming the way people think about aging and disability! Join us for a short program, raffle, silent auction, food and wine, and plenty of time to mingle and enjoy.

To sponsor or buy tickets: <http://bit.ly/CelebrateSDA2019>

Disability and Aging Capitol Action Day: Thursday, May 23rd!

The Disability Action Coalition and California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA) will co-host the first **Disability and Aging Capitol Action Day** on Thursday May 23rd, mobilizing California's senior and disability communities in Sacramento. The day will be filled with opportunities to build community, share resources, educate our policymakers and elevate the collective power of older adults and people with disabilities. SDA has a big, fun contingent every year. Please join us! Call (415) 546-1333 and talk to any staff to learn more and to sign up. See you in Sacramento!

The Disability Action Coalition's 2019 Policy Platform:

AB 1434: SSI/SSP: Increase the SSI payment to the poverty line.

SB 512: Long term services and supports: Establish a Benefits Board to oversee a program to provide LTSS to eligible Californians. A companion budget proposal will be submitted to the budget committees for a \$1 million feasibility study.

AB 392: Peace Officers: Deadly Force: Authorizes police officers to use deadly force *only* when it is necessary to prevent imminent and serious bodily injury or death. Current law says "reasonable to prevent..."

SB 329: Discrimination: housing: source of income: Prevent discrimination on the basis of source of income for rent. Currently there is nothing to prevent Section 8 Housing voucher holders from being denied housing from a private landlord.

AB 715: Raise the Medi-Cal aged & disabled income level: Raise the income level to 138% of the poverty level for all Medi-Cal users so people don't lose health care when they reach 65 years of age.

SB 338: Senior and disability victimization: law enforcement policies: Require local law enforcement agencies to adopt a policy regarding senior and disability victimization, as defined; requires investigation and training; includes accountability.

SB 10: Mental health services: peer, parent, transition-age, and family support specialist certification: Sets up a certification program for peer providers.



Photo: SDA members at Disability Capitol Action Day 2018

Rules Committee Hears Ordinance on New Conservatorship Program

On May 13, the Board of Supervisors' Rules Committee heard the ordinance to create a new form of conservatorship under SB 1045, the state law that passed last year. SB 1045 allows counties to implement a pilot program to create a new category of guardianship for people who have a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, and eight or more involuntary 72-hour holds in one year. SDA has been organizing with the Voluntary Services First Coalition against this law and in favor of more mental health services and housing to prevent people from getting to a crisis state to begin with. On May 13, dozens of community members, including about 15 SDA members, attended the hearing and spoke against implementation in San Francisco.

At the hearing, the Rules Committee supervisors shared many of the concerns of the Voluntary Services First Coalition. Committee Chair Hillary Ronen had many questions about how the new law would play out in practice, including whether or not San Francisco has adequate facilities to hold and treat people and how a potential conservatee would be compelled to attend their civil hearing. Supervisor Mar asked how many conservatees are currently in jail and what charges they are being held under, which neither the Department of Public Health nor the Department of Aging and Adult Services could answer. Supervisor Walton expressed the strongest concern about people losing their civil liberties, creating more interaction between police and people in mental health crises, and the racial bias that prevails in all systems of incarceration, whether civil or criminal. Walton said, "As a person of color there is always concern anytime there is a system of incarceration, or taking away someone's liberties to be free; it typically disproportionately affects Black people and typically disproportionately affects people of color. That's one of the biggest reasons why... I'm not excited about this."

During public comment, many community members spoke against the measure, including SDA members, Coalition on Homelessness, ACLU, Mental Health Association, and 12 UCSF medical students who expressed opposition to taking people out of the community for treatment when recovery is most successful within the community. Some proponents of the measure included the Chamber of Commerce, the S.F. Travel Association, the Eureka Valley Neighborhood Association, and a couple of psychiatrists.

The Committee voted to continue (postpone) the hearing until May 20, with the expectation that city departments would gather some of the missing information by then. ***Join us on May 20 at 10am at City Hall to voice opposition to this ordinance and to advocate for community mental health services instead.***

JOIN THE SENIOR & DISABILITY CONTINGENTS AT PRIDE!
SDA will join the Openhouse senior contingent and the disability contingent with LightHouse for the Blind at this year's LGBTQ Pride Parade! Please join us Sunday, June 30. Call or email Jessica at (415) 546-1333 or jessica@sdaction.org for more information.



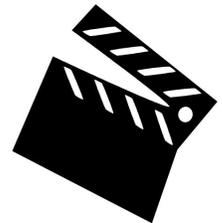
Community Calendar: June/July 2019

DATE	ACTIVITY	TIME & PLACE	MORE INFO?
Mon-Fri	Computer Open Lab and Beginning Computer Classes	Mon-Fri 9:00 AM-4:00 PM 1360 Mission Street Suite 400 Classes Tues/Weds. 9:30-2	Pi Ra 415-546-2096
1st Thursday June 6th	IHSS Task Force Meeting	10:30 AM 1360 Mission St. #400	Jessica Lehman 415-546-1333 x301
1st Thursday June 6th	SDA Board Meeting	3:00-5:00 PM 1360 Mission St. #400	Jessica Lehman 415-546-1333 x301
September 12th	SDA General Meeting	10:00 AM 1187 Franklin Street	SDA 415-546-1333
2nd Thursday June 13th July 11th	CARA meeting	1 PM 1187 Franklin Street	Jodi Reid 550-0828
2nd Tuesday June 11th July 9th August 13th	HealthCare Action Team (HAT)	11 AM ILRC 825 Howard	Ligia Montano 415-546-1333 x302
3rd Wednesday June 19th July 17th August 21st	SDA Housing Collaborative	1-3 PM 1360 Mission Street, #400	Tony Robles 415-546-1333 x305
3rd Friday June 21st July 19th	Mayor's Disability Council	1-4 PM City Hall Room 400	Mayor's Office on Disability 415-554-6789

SDA's General Meeting is canceled in June, July, and August!

Due to renovations to the church and our usual summer vacation, our next meeting will be September 12.

We will be having two movie nights this summer instead! Join us on Friday, July 12, and Friday, August 9, at 2 pm at SDA's office.



SDA's office and all meeting and event locations are wheelchair-accessible. We are scent-free, so please remember not to wear perfumes, scented lotions or detergents, etc. If you need ASL interpretation or any other accommodation for a meeting, please contact us as soon as possible.

San Francisco Senior and Disability Action
1360 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103
Phone: 415-546-1333
Fax: 415-546-1344
www.sdaction.org

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Senior and Disability Action News and Views

Senior and Disability Action News is produced by SDA Staff and volunteers.

We would like to hear from you! Send information and commentary to info@sdaction.org or call (415) 546-1333.

Reminder: Membership renewals for all SDA members are due at the beginning of each year. Please send in or bring in as soon as possible!

Become a Member of Senior and Disability Action!!

Dues are \$20/year *OR* according to your means. Pay more or less as you are able.

Name: _____ Renewal

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Home Work

Phone: _____ Cell Home Work

Email: _____

Interests: Housing Healthcare Long-term care & supports

Community education Computer training Pedestrian safety & transit Other:

How would you like to receive newsletters & postcards? Email Postal mail

Please send dues to: SDA, 1360 Mission St. #400, San Francisco CA 94103