

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Critical Hours of Home Care to be Restored July 1

Seniors, People with Disabilities and Their Caregivers Celebrate Victory for Health and Dignity

Vow to Continue Fight Until Permanent Funding is Restored

Sacramento, CA – Caregivers, advocates, seniors and people with disabilities celebrated the restoration of critical hours of care for clients of the In-Home Supportive Services program in the budget agreement announced today. In the midst of the state budget crisis, care was reduced to 7% below the hours determined necessary for clients to live at home, rather than in institutional settings. When voted on by the Legislature and signed by Governor Brown, the agreement will restore the hours of care evaluations say are needed to maintain the health and quality of life for each and every child and adult served by the program. The restoration of hours will start on July 1, 2015. The funding is designated as one-time funding with future funding pending the passage of a new managed care tax.

“Today’s announcement that critical hours of care will be restored to In-Home Supportive Services clients shows that when seniors, people with disabilities and those who care for them stand together, we deliver justice,” said Laphonza Butler, President of SEIU California and SEIU-ULTCW (United Long-Term Care Workers).

At the same time, caregivers and their advocates vowed to redouble their efforts in order to renew funding next year.

“Our fight isn’t over until every hour restored this year is restored for good. We’ll continue to press legislators and the governor for a permanent restoration of care that is a lifeline for seniors and people with disabilities as well as a sound investment for California taxpayers,” said Doug Moore, Executive Director of United Domestic Workers (UDW).

The budget signing is welcome news for seniors and people with disabilities who’ve had to make impossible choices under the cut. Some clients have had to choose which necessity to go

without, since each hour of care is critical to preventing compromising health conditions. Such critical services include help with incontinence, bathing, eating or attending medical appointments. For those clients whose care is provided by family members, the cut in hours means precious dollars needed for food, rent, and utilities are chopped out of the budgets of families already living on the bare minimum.

“Today’s victory means I won’t have to choose between providing my three clients the care they need and putting food on the table,” said Mieachia Cooper, a home care provider from Riverside.

Today’s announcement came after home care providers rallied alongside the people with disabilities and seniors for whom they care. Since the first budget was proposed by Governor Brown in January, they have provided legislative testimony, held vigils, sent thousands of letters, emails and made phone calls demanding full restoration of the critical care.

Organizations representing more than six million Californians signed onto the campaign for the budget restoration that would provide a “Pathway to Dignity” for vulnerable children and adults who live with severe disabilities and/or chronic diseases. Organizations supporting the budget restoration included the California Medical Association, AARP, Congress of California Seniors, and the California Labor Federation.

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UDW AFSCME Local 3930 and SEIU in California together represent hundreds of thousands of caregivers across the state who provide in-home support to 450,000 Californians who are sick, elderly or have disabilities.