

(Insert Letterhead)

(Insert Date)

(INSERT ADDRESSEE)

**SUBJECT: THE MSSP PROGRAM MUST NOT BE ELIMINATED FROM THE HEALTH CARE SAFETY NET FOR FRAIL ELDERERS**

Dear (INSERT ADDRESSEE):

This letter is to urge you to reject the proposal to eliminate the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP). Eliminating this program will **immediately cost** the State and Counties millions and will **force** the poorest and medically frailest seniors into nursing homes and increased utilization of acute care and emergency services which will **cost more than \$110 million annually**.

In San Francisco, MSSP is operated by Institute on Aging, and the program serves a caseload of 501 patients. Among the 501 patients, more than 50% are certified by a Public Health Nurse at Skilled Nursing Facility Level of Care. They are the frailest of the frail, and their ability to stay at home is very much dependent on services provided by MSSP. Access to care is extremely important to the population we serve. Many of our patients and their family members are immigrants and non-English speaking. Our team has the capacity to provide services in Cantonese, Mandarin, Tagalog, Farsi, Spanish, Russian, Korean, Vietnamese and English. If MSSP is eliminated, the burden on the City's services would be unimaginable.

Keep in mind the following **cost effective** facts about the MSSP Program:

- **Total public costs of MSSP patients are 47 percent LOWER than the cost of nursing facility placement<sup>1</sup>**
- If just 9% of MSSP patients (1,145) are placed in a nursing home, the entire "savings" from MSSP elimination is immediately wiped out
- Lowers healthcare costs—100% of MSSP patients have multiple chronic conditions (MCC)—studies show patients with MCC are the highest cost health care utilizers in the absence of coordinated care such as MSSP
- Helps patients access the right level of health care services at the right time to prevent more costly care
- Helps patients find and advocates for critically-needed services in a fragmented and shrinking safety net
- **Supports** local economies through contracts with hundreds of small businesses throughout the state

It is understood that these are challenging times for California, but only financially sound decisions are going to improve the California budget. Cutting MSSP **is not cost effective** and will **do harm** to the **most frail, most vulnerable** population while economically wounding the communities in which they live. MSSP must be at the top of the list to be **PRESERVED**. No other program provides older adults with MSSP's comprehensive cost effective services.

If you or your staff has any questions or if we can be of help in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me at (insert contact info).

Sincerely,

(name and title)

cc: Erin Levi, Lehman, Levi, Pappas and Sadler  
916-441-5338

(insert other officials)

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<sup>1</sup> Based on data from CMS-372, Annual Report on Home and Community-Based Waivers (FY2008-09). This report compares annual average per capita Medicaid costs for HCBS for individuals in the waiver program with costs for institutionalized persons at the same level of care.