

February 15, 2010

To: To Whom It May Concern -

From: **The Advisory Committee to the In-Home Supportive Services program**  
**Of Santa Barbara County**

This committee –and on behalf of the many thousands of voiceless individuals we represent, have serious concerns about California's State leaders' unconscionable intentions to dismantle and eliminate our State's shining model of long-term community health care delivery, the In-Home Supportive Services Program (IHSS).

Since its inception in the early 1980s, the IHSS program has effectively attended to California's medically desperate and underserved senior citizen and disabled populations; permitting hundreds of thousands of low-income individuals to remain in their homes, and out of nursing homes, *where the extraordinary cost of care would have plagued and overburdened State taxpayers decades ago.*

When considering the budget cuts to all other publicly funded programs, however, the cuts to IHSS unfairly penalize these two economically vulnerable groups; groups having had absolutely no role in bringing California down to her fiscal knees. Yet, despite their being inculpable, they are the ones who will pay dearly as they're being placed squarely into a high-risk situation for institutional placement: because most IHSS recipients simply cannot afford even some modest out-of-pocket expenditures for in-home care, and would therefore, find themselves involuntarily venturing from home to nursing home soon after the IHSS program funds were terminated.

## What is at stake?

### **Jobs, Jobs, Jobs:**

On January 5 of this year, in response to California's 12.5% unemployment rate, governor Schwarzenegger stated, "***That is why my New Year's Resolution is to help speed up our economic recovery and create a job for every Californian who wants one. My Number One priority is jobs, jobs, jobs.***"

Facts:

- In Santa Barbara County alone there are 2,900 Individual Providers for IHSS recipients
- Statewide, approximately 410,000 individuals provide IHSS services (November 2008 CMIPS data)

What are the stakes here? Many hundreds of thousands of jobs: jobs that will be stripped away from IHSS providers. In addition, there will be an enormous *domino effect* felt by all of the retailers once patronized by the IHSS providers, which can account for hundreds of unduplicated business entities.

We, as IHSS advocates, have spent the past two years tirelessly pressing legislators, senators, and the governor to lessen the threat to abolishing civil society's safety net, and help to avoid punishing

these innocent groups of people, ***while huge corporations receive enormous tax breaks***, when totaled together could rescue most of the social service programs being cut.

Therefore, we write to you in earnest again, urgently asking that you think long and hard about the very real moral consequences resulting from subjecting hundreds of thousands of innocent lives to unwanted institutional worlds that you yourself would fight tooth and nail to avoid being placed into.

In the past we have suggested several solutions which could act to balance the budget without slashing IHSS, along with some modest, evenly allotted across-the-board cuts. We'll put them before you again for your consideration:

- Oil Extraction Fee
- Gasoline tax of .03 per gallon
- An additional \$2.00 tax on tobacco products
- Modest drug and alcohol tax
- Modest Park Fee Hikes
- Modest Vehicle Registration Fee hike

If these reasonable measures were begun in 2008 as many advocates pressed for, we would have a balanced budget today. Yet, because some intransigent legislators have pledged not to raise a single cent in State taxes, even these right-minded revenues have been nixed.

We hope you have read and heed our words of warning. We hope you have read and heed the Legislative Analyst's Office's reports which confirm our contentions that the State of California will suffer an even worse fiscal calamity should people be driven off the IHSS rolls and placed onto the rolls of the inadequately prepared nursing home system.

Thank you in advance for taking measures to straighten out California's fiscal crisis without upending a sound community health delivery program, IHSS.