



AB 796, Kalra/Thurmond, Public Social Services SSI/SSP

What is AB 796, and why do we need it?

AB 796 is an incremental step toward full restoration of recession-era cuts to the SSI/SSP program, a combination Federal/State program that awards monthly grants to over 1 million California seniors and other disabled adults who get no or minimal Social Security benefits.

AB 796, as amended, would establish a Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA) as a permanent component to the SSI/SSP program starting January 2018. It would also mandate that payments be at least 96% of Federal Poverty Level in 2017 and 100% of FPL in 2018. This goes well beyond the Governor's proposed smaller one-year increase in the State portion (SSP).

California SSI/SSP has undergone shameful cuts during the recession years. In 2009 the annual COLA was abolished. Since then, the state funded SSP portion of grants been cut from \$233 a month to \$156 a month today for individuals and from \$568 a month in January 2009 to \$396.20 today for couples. SSI recipients are now at 70% of Poverty Level. Since 2007, the SSI/SSP caseload has increased by some 75,000. Low SSI/SSP is a big reason California has the highest poverty rate in the nation, by the Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure.

Over half of California's one million on SSI/SSP are women, many are becoming homeless. Moreover, California SSI/SSP recipients are not eligible for Food Stamps.

California's budget is now running multi-billion dollar surpluses. Over 150 California advocacy organizations are demanding an increase in grants and restoration of the COLA for SSI/SSP recipients.

Where is AB 796 in the legislative process?

AB 796 is in Assembly Appropriations, held under submission, basically dead. The author intends to re-introduce the bill later. This is a battle in both the legislative and budget arenas.

What Can You Do to Help Pass AB 796?

Stay tuned for future plans to bring SSI/SSP recipients into lives of dignity:

- In this time of budget comfort, it is shameful that SSI/SSP remain below poverty-level income and without COLAs

Assembly Appropriations Committee, updated 4-15-2017					
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