



For Immediate Release

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Despite Record \$97B Budget Surplus, Joint Assembly and Senate Budget Agreement Fails to Support Vulnerable Californians Served by County Public Guardians and Conservators; Significant Additional Demand Expected by CARE Court

Demand has soared 26% over the past three years and caseloads are already double professional standards

SACRAMENTO, CA — The California State Association of Public Administrators, Public Guardians, and Public Conservators (PA|PG|PC) are sounding alarms as the Assembly and Senate prepare to send a budget to Governor Newsom’s desk without any additional funding to support California’s Public Guardians and Conservators programs. While state leaders routinely decry a growing crisis of homelessness, neither the Governor nor Legislators’ recent budget proposals provide any additional support to Guardian and Conservator programs serving Californians at risk because of severe mental illness as caseloads soar. What’s more, [Governor Newsom’s CARE Court proposal](#) is sure to result in additional referrals to a Conservatorship system already on the brink of crisis.

“County public guardian and conservator safety net programs are already under extreme pressure and this budget does nothing to help us serve the vulnerable Californians who need us most,” said **Scarlet Hughes, Executive Director of the California State Association of Public Administrators, Public Guardians, and Public Conservators**. “As California’s coffers overflow with a \$97 billion budget surplus, Governor Newsom and the state legislature must not ignore the needs of Californians counting on us to provide them with the dignity, care, and support they deserve.”

PA|PG|PC has been urgently communicating the need for state resources to shore up the local safety net system on the brink of crisis. Demands for their services have soared 26% over the past three years and caseloads are more than double professional standards. California’s public

guardians and conservators are calling for the state to make an annual investment of \$200 million to augment annual county spending of \$258 million to address existing cases and referrals from CARE Court through the Lanterman-Petris-Short conservator process.

“County public guardians and public conservators are a vital part of the continuum of care, but our services for vulnerable Californians are already stretched too thin and it is clear additional demands will be placed on our system as clients are referred to us through the Governor’s CARE Court initiative. Without dedicated state resources even to meet the current needs of homeless Californians, victims of financial crime, and abused and neglected seniors, our system risks crumbling under this additional pressure and compromising the potential benefits envisioned through CARE Court,” added Hughes. “California’s leaders must right this wrong by dedicating less than a quarter of 1% from the \$97 billion budget surplus - \$200 million annually - to augment county spending of \$258 million annually to protect clients’ assets and facilitate decision-making to improve the well-being of clients who are unable to care for themselves.”

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