



City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve

Office of Gerrie Schipske
Councilwoman, Fifth District
Memorandum
R-29

Date: June 2, 2009

To: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

From: Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske, Fifth District

Subject: **AGENDA ITEM: Opposition to Future Reductions to SSI, IHSS, and Medi-Cal Optional Benefits**

BACKGROUND

Thousands of Long Beach residents benefit from Supplemental Security Income (SSI), In Home Supportive Services (IHSS), and Medi-Cal Optional Benefits. The proposed state budget slashes could possibly cut these dependable programs that provide quality of life for senior and residents with disabilities. On February 20, 2009, Governor Schwarzenegger signed a spending plan that lead to significant service reductions, including cuts to IHSS and SSI to bridge the state's budget gap.

Supplemental Security Income is a monthly stipend provided to aged (legally deemed to be 65 or older), blind, or disabled persons based on need,

In-Home Supportive Service will help pay for services provided to you so that you can remain safely in your own home. To be eligible, you must be over 65 years of age, or disabled, or blind. The types of services which can be authorized through IHSS are housecleaning, meal preparation, laundry, grocery shopping, personal care services (such as bowel and bladder care, bathing, grooming and paramedical services), accompaniment to medical appointments, and protective supervision for the mentally impaired.

Med-Cal Optional Benefits include adult dental benefits, optometry, opticians and optical labs, audiology, podiatry, speech therapy, psychology services, and chiropractic care.

On May 1, the State of California reduced SSI payments to their December 1, 2008 level. For an individual recipient, this meant that the maximum grant dropped from \$907 a month to \$864 a month. SSI recipients are scheduled to receive an additional cut on July 1, 2009 which will reduce the maximum grant to \$844 a month. In the arena of IHSS, home healthcare workers have had their wages reduced from \$12.10 TO \$10.10 per hour. This reduced pay often results in lower quality workers providing personal care assistance to people with disabilities. Lastly, the potential elimination of Medi-Cal Optional Benefits would results in the loss of medical and services defined above.

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
Opposition to Future Reductions to SSI, IHSS, and Medi-Cal Optional Benefits
Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske, Fifth District
June 2, 2009
Page 2

SSI, IHSS, and Medi-Cal Optional Benefits are vital to support the continued quality of life that many residents with disabilities and/or seniors are able to enjoy. It is therefore requested that the City Council communicate to our representatives serving in the State Legislature the City of Long Beach's opposition to further cuts to these vital programs.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that the City Council communicate to our representatives in the State Legislature the City of Long Beach's opposition to further reductions to Supplemental Security Income, In-Home Supportive Services, and Medi-Cal Optional Benefits.