

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
ACTION AGENDA SUMMARY

COA

DEPT: Community Services Agency

BOARD AGENDA # *A-2a

Urgent Routine

AGENDA DATE April 27, 2010

CEO Concurs with Recommendation YES NO
(Information Attached)

4/5 Vote Required YES NO

SUBJECT:

Proclamation of the Month of May 2010 Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Proclaim May 2010 as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month.
2. Issue a Resolution to highlight the need for elder and dependent adult abuse awareness in Stanislaus County.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this agenda item.

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2010-221

On motion of Supervisor Chiesa, Seconded by Supervisor DeMartini
and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Chiesa, Monteith, DeMartini, and Chairman Grover

Noes: Supervisors: None

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None

Abstaining: Supervisor: None

1) X Approved as recommended

2) _____ Denied

3) _____ Approved as amended

4) _____ Other:

MOTION:

Christine Ferraro

ATTEST: CHRISTINE FERRARO TALLMAN, Clerk

File No.

DISCUSSION:

Respecting all senior citizens and dependent adults in Stanislaus County includes being aware of potential abuse for this population. Each year hundreds of thousands of older, frail and vulnerable citizens are abused, neglected and exploited by family members and others. Although all 50 states have laws against elder and dependent adult abuse, the incidents of abuse have tripled over the last ten (10) years.

In California, Adult Protective Services received 113,905 reports of abuse to elders and dependent adults in 2009. In this same time period, Stanislaus County Adult Protective Services program received 1,766 reports of abuse to elders and dependent adults. This is estimated to be only about one quarter of the abuse that actually occurs.

Whether the abuse is financial, physical, emotional or basic neglect, our senior citizens and disabled adults have the right to protection under the law even from members of their own family. Statistics show that in 90 percent of all cases of abuse, the perpetrator is a family member, generally a child or grandchild. Victims may be embarrassed, intimidated or overwhelmed by the situation. They may be afraid of reprisal by their abuser or unaware that there is help available.

Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse is an issue that no one should ignore. All citizens, especially our most vulnerable citizens, should be able to live safe, secure lives, without fear, neglect, pain or exploitation. Abuse occurs in private homes as well as in assisted living and skilled nursing facilities.

This year, Congress passed the Elder Justice Act, which will provide funding and consistency for Adult Protective Services and Ombudsman programs on a national level. In Stanislaus County, the Stanislaus Elder Abuse Prevention Alliance (SEAPA) has created partnerships with the Adult Protective Services, Area Agency on Aging, Public Guardian, Ombudsman, District Attorney, law enforcement, local fire departments, financial institutions, AARP, utility companies, health services, and various other organizations. These partnerships have taken on the responsibility of elder abuse education, advocacy, training, and problem solving with outreach efforts throughout the community. These agencies also participate in the Stanislaus County Multi-Disciplinary team, whose purpose is to develop treatment strategies, maximize coordination, access community resources, and avoid duplication of effort. As our population ages and the escalation of abuse continue, it is imperative that both professionals and laypersons become more aware of the scope and issues surrounding this sensitive topic. Education is the key to prevention and intervention.

A proclamation by the Board of Supervisors that the month of May is "Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month" will help to focus awareness of elder

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and dependent adult abuse in Stanislaus County.

POLICY ISSUE:

Proclaiming May as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month supports the Board's priorities of a *Healthy Community* and a *Safe Community* by recognizing the importance of heightening the awareness of elder and dependent adult abuse in Stanislaus County.

STAFFING IMPACT:

There is no staffing impact associated with this request.

CONTACT PERSON:

Christine C. Applegate, Director. Telephone: 558-2500

**Proclaim the Month of May 2010 as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse
Awareness Month in Stanislaus County**

WHEREAS, Every year, more than two (2) million disabled and elderly citizens in the United States are victims of physical and emotional abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation; and

WHEREAS, financial abuse is a rising concern and is frequently perpetrated by persons close to the elder or dependent adult who capitalize on that close relationship and the individual's trust; and

WHEREAS, the rising crime of elder and dependent adult abuse in any form is tragic and unacceptable; and

WHEREAS, in California, Adult Protective Services received 113,905 reports of abuse to elders and dependent adults last year; and

WHEREAS, in Stanislaus County, more than 1,766 vulnerable adults were the victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation in Stanislaus County in 2009; and

WHEREAS, the personal losses associated with abuse can be devastating and include the loss of independence, homes, life savings, health, dignity, and security; and

WHEREAS, statistics show that victims of abuse have a shorter life expectancies than non-abused older people; and

WHEREAS, the health and well-being of disabled and elderly people in our state should be one of our highest priorities and of concern to all Americans; and

WHEREAS, no aspect of our society-technology, agriculture, science, religion, sports, education-would enjoy its current prominence without the past contributions from our elders; and

WHEREAS, people who are elderly or have disabilities are among the valued resources of our County, State, and Nation. It is fitting that we recognize the need to protect their health, safety, and rights; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Stanislaus, State of California, does hereby proclaim May 2010 as Stanislaus County Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month.