

COMMITTEE: GENERAL	DATE: JUNE 4, 2020	LOCATION: TELECONFERENCE
<p>PRESENT: Bortel, Barry, Boutilier, Brilliant, Brinkmann, Dowling, Etemovic, Gunn, Lamorte, Locks, López, Marchese, Nuessle, Silverman, Timms, Vreeland Long, Weingarten</p> <p>EXCUSED: Asimos, Bradley, Kwentus, Saffran, Zeller</p> <p>VACANT: None</p>		
RECORDER: Mandy Reyes		
NEXT MEETING: Thursday, July 2, 2020, Zoom Teleconference		

MINUTE SUMMARY	ACTION TAKEN/RESPONSIBLE PARTY
----------------	--------------------------------------

<p>Call to Order Chair Marchese called the meeting to order at 11:14 a.m.</p> <p>Approval of Agenda The agenda of June 4, 2020 was approved as amended with Chair Ralph Marchese and Vice-Chair Diana Lopez written under Action Item.</p> <p>Approval of the Minutes The minutes of May 7, 2020 were approved as written.</p> <p>Open Time for Public Expression: Linda Jackson, Aging Action Initiative (AAI):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ She is looking forward to partnering on advocacy for masked trees in Marin. 	
--	--

- She wanted to point out that it is not density within and of itself that is the problem of COVID-19. There are dense communities in Marin that have not had an outbreak including older adult residential facilities. There was a great article on COVID-19 in San Francisco and New York City and what a difference good governance makes and good public health decisions.

Chair's Report:

Chair Marchese reported on the following:

- Marchese had a conversation with Dr. Brilliant and Director Lee Pullen. He asked Dr. Brilliant what the commission should focus on given that the commission is among the most vulnerable to the virus. He said that if the commission only does one thing, it would be to focus on the nursing homes. There needs to be multiple rounds of testing on a scheduled basis for the caregivers and the patients.
- Marchese is in communication with a group of people from Harvard that were in the Executive Leadership Program that Matthew Hymel has participated in. This group and Chair Marchese will speak with Matthew Hymel about inviting the National Medical Student Response Network to send medical students and/or nurses to work in the county in response to any one of the priorities that correlates with their clinical expertise and their interest in the social determinate of health.
- Over the next two months, given all that we have just heard, the commission needs to prioritize the initiatives and what we want to address.
- The impact of COVID-19 on the ethnic and minority communities. They need more attention. This should be explored by the Equity, Outreach and Advocacy Committee as to how to flush out a response.

Vice Chair's Report:

Vice Chair López reported on the following:

- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, **What Can the World Teach Us About Building a Culture of Health, June 4, 2020, 10:00 a.m.** On June 4th, we'll be discussing what U.S. communities can learn from cities and countries around the world, like Scotland and Bhutan, that are reorienting policies, programs and budgets to put the well-being of people and the planet at the center of all decisions. **Join us to learn:**
 - How to shift to a well-being approach in your community

- What a well-being approach means for equity
- How a well-being approach has informed COVID-19 response

Speakers include

- [Karabi Acharya, director, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#)
- [Lisa Parson, Project Manager, The Wellbeing Project—City of Santa Monica](#)
- [Katherine Trebeck, Ppolicy & Influencing lead, Wellbeing Economy Alliance](#)
- **Fierce Healthcare**
 - Healthcare jobs declined by 1.4M in April as physician practices shed 243, 000 jobs
 - Kaiser Permanente reported a \$1.1 billion loss in the first quarter—a drop from \$3.2 billion in income in the first quarter a year earlier, blamed largely on investment losses.
 - A poll found that roughly half of seniors are comfortable using telehealth to get healthcare, and those that do largely say that they had a favorable experience. The poll was conducted by Morning Consult and sponsored by the better Medicare Alliance. The survey of more than 1000seniors found that 52% are comfortable using telehealth, with 30% uncomfortable and 18% unsure. The results come as clinicians and insurers question the role that telehealth will have in healthcare after COVID-19.
- **Center for Strategic & International Studies**
 - A video in support of frontline worker <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2SvqVdrAw4>.
- **Justice in Ageing**
 - Justice in Aging joined AARP and the Center for Medicare Advocacy in submitting an [amicus brief](#) in *California v. Texas*, supporting several states that are urging the U.S. Supreme Court to reverse a Fifth Circuit court ruling and uphold the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). [Read the full amicus brief.](#)
 - **CMS Issues Recommendations on “Reopening” Nursing Facilities** The week of May 18th the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued recommendations on loosening the state of emergency under which nursing facilities have been operating. The CMS Guidance is tied to the federal government’s Opening Up America Again guidelines, which distinguish between three phases in the opening-up process. Under the CMS recommendations, nursing facilities would remain largely closed to visitors until Phase Three, which would be dependent upon the nursing facility having no new COVID

cases within the preceding 28 days, having access to COVID-19 testing, and meeting other criteria.

- **Senate Aging Committee Focuses Hearing on COVID-19 Response**

On Thursday, the Senate Aging Committee held a [hearing on “Caring for Seniors Amid the COVID-19 Crisis.”](#) Ahead of the hearing, Ranking Member Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA) and Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) introduced the [Nursing Home COVID-19 Protection and Prevention Act \(S. 3768\)](#), which would help states implement strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in congregate settings, including increasing access to personal protective equipment (PPE) and testing, and supporting nursing home workers with premium pay, overtime, and other essential benefits.

- Earlier this month, Sen. Casey, Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH), and Sen. Doug Jones (D-AL) introduced the [COVID-19 Recovery for Seniors and People with Disabilities Act \(S. 3740\)](#). The bill would increase timely access to Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), and Medicare; support senior legal services; and provide funding to help older adults with limited English proficiency and individuals with disabilities access benefits and COVID-19 information.

- **Bill Introduced in Senate to Expand Immigrants’ Access to Health Care**

On Wednesday, Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) introduced the Health Equity and Access under the Law (HEAL) for Immigrant Women and Families Act to expand immigrants’ access to health coverage for the first time in the Senate, at a time when ensuring every person has comprehensive health care has never been more critical. The HEAL Act would remove the five-year waiting period that immigrants are subject to before becoming eligible for Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). This would enable more older immigrants to be eligible for the Medicare Savings Programs, helping them afford their Medicare coverage. It would also restore Medicaid eligibility for COFA (Federated States of Micronesia, The Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau) migrants and enable undocumented immigrants to purchase health insurance plans from the Affordable Care Act Marketplace. Justice in Aging joins more than 200 organizations endorsing the bill, which was most recently introduced in the House (H.R. 4701) by Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-WA) in October 2019.

- **House Ways & Means Committee Examines COVID-19 Impact on Communities of Color** On May 27th, the House Ways & Means Committee held a hearing entitled “The Disproportionate Impact of COVID-19 on Communities of Color.” [You can listen to the full hearing and read the testimony of the witnesses.](#)

- **The New School/ Retirement Equity Lab**

The COVID-19 economic crisis exposes the flaws and fault lines in the U.S. retirement system. Millions of older workers forced out of work not only stopped contributing to retirement plans, but had to raid their retirement savings to make ends meet. For those who kept their jobs, many saw their employers halt matching 401(k) contributions. Millions of those deemed essential workers continue laboring without any retirement plans at all.

If we do nothing to fix our retirement system, 43 million people now in their fifties and early sixties [will be poor or near-poor elders](#), owing to both the recession and to inadequate retirement plans. Widespread retirement insecurity weakens older workers’ bargaining power. Without a solid fallback plan, older workers must accept whatever wages are offered.

The retirement crisis did not begin with the COVID-19 pandemic. Even in normal times, millions of older workers face a choice between earning insufficient wages under bad working conditions or retiring without adequate income. Since half of workers fall into retirement involuntarily (Chart 6), retiring without adequate savings is not their choice. The reality is that employers and market conditions often determine the desirability of older workers. This differs from the idealized vision of work at older ages, which includes seniority in the workplace, control over hours and pace of work, and a dignified retirement. These are benefits available only to a privileged upper class of older workers. This chartbook is a resource for workers, employers, media, policymakers, scholars, and the broader public, to answer questions about the state of older working America and retirement income security. It illustrates the twin challenges facing older workers: insufficient retirement income and mounting challenges in the labor market. It also provides insights into older workers’ economic vulnerability, such as their increasingly fragile finances (Chart 4).

This chartbook connects retirement insecurity to older workers' basic labor market realities, revealing a central point: secure retirement income boosts older workers' bargaining power, which leads to better wages, hours, and working conditions. Access to quality retirement savings plans improve older workers' jobs.

The retirement crisis reflects systemic problems that require systemic solutions.

Assigning blame to individuals for saving too little ignores the reality that many older workers are vulnerable because of flaws in the retirement system and imbalances in bargaining power between workers and employers. Addressing the retirement crisis means acknowledging these underlying realities. Download the full chartbook [here](#).

- **12 Million Of The 29 Million Middle-Class Older Workers Will Be Downwardly Mobile In Retirement**
 - The COVID-19 recession exacerbates an already-precarious situation for middle-class older workers. Inadequate retirement account balances will cause 11 million middle-class older workers and their spouses to be downwardly mobile, falling into de facto poverty when they retire at age 65. Due to the COVID-19 economic shock, an additional 1.1 million are projected to be poor when they retire. Altogether, 42 percent of older, working households in the middle class will fall into de facto poverty. Without expanding Social Security or instituting reliable retirement options for all, retirement will cause downward mobility for millions of middle-class households.

- **Americans Work Longer And Die Earlier Than Elders In Other Advanced Countries**
 - In the U.S., retirement time has failed to keep up with our peer nations. For countries in the G7 group excluding the U.S. (Germany, France, U.K., Canada, Japan and Italy), estimated time between retirement and death for men rose about 75 percent, compared to roughly 50 percent for male elders in the United States. For women, the disparity is greater in absolute terms, with a four-year gap in retirement time opening up since the early 2000s.

- **Older Workers Are Getting Paid Less For Their Experience**
 - Typically, more job experience and seniority results in higher wages. But for the last 20 years, older workers experienced falling returns to tenure once we control for other

factors like occupation, race, gender, and union status. In the early 2000s, an additional year of tenure was associated with a roughly 1.5 percent increase in wages. By the 2010s, the average returns to tenure fell by almost half to around 0.8 percent. This decrease in returns to tenure reflects diminished bargaining power among older workers, whose on-the-job experience no longer commands the same wage increases as it once did.

Action Item:

Election of Officers for Fiscal Year 2020-21

Nomination for Chair: Ralph Marchese

Nomination for Vice-chair: Diana Lopez

Nomination for Secretary: Jean Gunn

The commissioners voted with the following response:

Ralph Marchese passed with 11 votes

Diana Lopez passed with 11 votes

Jean Gunn passed with 13 votes

Committee Reports:

Health and Nutrition (Asimos):

- No report

Housing and Transportation (Bortel):

- The committee met on May 20. The speaker was Adriana Aimes from Fair Housing of Northern California.
- Marin Transit's report came from Robert Betts. He reported how they are handling things during the pandemic.
- Next meeting is July 15.

Legislative (Boutilier):

- The governor is proposing to eliminate community-based adult services which is Adult daycare. Repurposing senior services. Eliminating the Multi-Purpose Senior Services program. Cutting funds to senior nutrition, long-term care ombudsman, age and disability resource connection

programs, independent living centers, elimination of the budget augmentation that was previously approved for caregiver resource centers, restrictions in Medi-Cal eligibility, loss of optional benefits, and restrictions in Medi-Cal SSI and SSP benefit levels.

- Boutilier is hoping to get a letter regarding the governor's budget approved right away and send a copy to members of the BOS. If they choose to act, please encourage them to do that.

Planning (Brilliant):

- No report

AdHoc (Silverman):

- The committee is wrapping up their organizational work. They finished the wording for the bylaws. Those are going to the Executive committee.
- Thanked Jean Gunn and Sybil Boutilier who worked on objectives for the committee.
- Commissioners Lopez and Silverman worked on doing outreach. They have contacted 3 different organizations. The Latino Council has responded and will hopefully be involved.
- Next meeting is on June 11.

Ageing Action Initiative (AAI) Updates (Linda Jackson and Teri Dowling):

- There will be an Inform and Connect session on June 15 about older adult residential care facilities in Marin. This will be a chance to learn the facts about what is really going on.
- AAI has been advocating for more specificity in terms of the age cohorts.
- Advocacy Alliance of the AAI met yesterday, and the big topic was the governor's budget cuts. They are encouraging letters to our representatives and to the governor as quickly as possible.
- They are working on getting representation on the county's reopening committees so that the views of non-profits and the needs of older adults are at the table, which they are not now.
- The next Inform and Connect meeting will be about death and dying.
- New steering committee member, Chantel Walker with the county library, will be starting soon.

Age-Friendly Update (Timms as Member of the Public):

- The exchange will be June 16
- They are looking at collaborating events.

Aging and Adult Services Report:

Lee Pullen, Director, Area Agency on Aging reported on the following:

- The Age-Friendly coordinator position posted as Sr. Department Analyst has been posted for 3 weeks, the deadline is Tuesday. It is a 3-year fixed position. If you know someone interested, please go ahead and apply.
- We extended our current contract with all of our providers through Sept. Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for contracts starting October 1 will be issued this month. We will be asking some of you to help us out in reviewing the RFPs.
- Director Pullen acknowledged Program Manager Jenay Cottrell and all her work around the Great Plates and the grocery delivery program. The grocery bag program has served 300 people and 2300 bags of grocery and 25,000 meals.
- Great Plates is the restaurant meal delivery program and has served around 750 people.

New Business and Announcements

June 5 is National Gun Violence Awareness Day, wear orange and orange throughout the weekend which will include Mother’s Against Gun Violence and Sensible Gun Laws.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 12:32 p.m.

The next meeting will be on July 2, 2020