

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1846

**Introduced by Assembly Member Strickland
(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Alquist)**

February 7, 2000

An act to add Chapter 4.5 (commencing with Section 9450) to Division 8.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to aging.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1846, as introduced, Strickland. Senior housing.

Existing law contains various provisions that require building standards and accessibility guidelines to ensure that public buildings and accommodations are open and available to persons with disabilities.

Existing law creates the California Department of Aging, which is required to administer various programs for the provision of services to elderly persons.

This bill would require the department, in consultation with the California Commission on Aging, to enter into a contract with an entity for the development of information and materials relating to the concept of "aging in place" and the benefits of home modification for seniors.

This bill would require the department to distribute these materials to area agencies on aging and other appropriate entities.

This bill would express the intent of the Legislature that funding for implementation of this bill be provided in the Budget Act.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 4.5 (commencing with Section
2 9450) is added to Division 8.5 of the Welfare and
3 Institutions Code, to read:

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5 CHAPTER 4.5. HOME MODIFICATIONS FOR SENIORS

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7 9450. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the
8 following:

9 (1) Thousands of California seniors are living with
10 mobility and health problems and these numbers will
11 increase as the state’s population ages. Statistics show that
12 50 percent of people over the age of 80 years are disabled
13 in some manner.

14 (2) Most housing was not designed for people who are
15 disabled, have lost strength, flexibility, or balance
16 through aging, and who necessarily have become fearful
17 or extremely cautious in their daily activities to avoid
18 injury. Front steps, staircases, narrow doorways, low
19 electric sockets, low light levels, round door handles, high
20 kitchen cabinets, and bathrooms without grab bars or
21 moveable shower heads pose hazards for the elderly. One
22 in three Americans over the age of 65 years suffers a fall
23 each year, often in the home, which can cause serious
24 injury and depression.

25 (3) Studies show that basic home modifications to
26 improve safety and make it easier to maneuver about the
27 home can forestall hospitalization and nursing home care
28 as seniors grow more fragile. “Aging in place” is a new
29 concept that can result in less injury, retaining elders in
30 their homes, and offers a significant cost savings to health
31 care insurers, families, and public agencies.

32 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature that the
33 development of the “aging in place” concept be
34 recognized and supported by the state, that funding for
35 education and making home improvements be facilitated



1 through public and private sources, and that
2 recommendations for changes in home modification
3 policies and information for home modification projects
4 and products be developed.

5 9451. The department, in consultation with the
6 commission, shall enter into a contract for the
7 development of information and materials which shall be
8 used to educate Californians on the concept of ‘aging in
9 place’ and the benefits of home modification. The
10 contractor shall be a research-based university
11 gerontology department with extensive experience and
12 work with the concept of “aging in place” and the
13 benefits of home modification.

14 9452. The department shall distribute the
15 information developed pursuant to Section 9451 to each
16 area agency on aging and to other appropriate entities
17 throughout the state.

18 9453. The department, in cooperation with the entity
19 contracting with the commission pursuant to Section
20 9451, shall sponsor regional training sessions, and
21 seminars, using the materials developed pursuant to this
22 chapter.

23 9454. It is the intent of the Legislature that funding
24 for implementation of this chapter be provided in the
25 Budget Act.

