

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 26, 2000  
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 24, 2000  
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 10, 2000

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—1999–2000 REGULAR SESSION

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 1846**

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**Introduced by Assembly Members Lowenthal, Strickland,  
and Alquist  
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bates, Bock, Cunneen,  
Leach, Maddox, Maldonado, Robert Pacheco, and Zettel)**

February 7, 2000

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An act to add a heading as Article 1 (commencing with Section 9100) to, and to add Article 2 (commencing with Section 9115) to, Chapter 2 of Division 8.5 of, and 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 amended, Lowenthal. 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 requires the California Department of Aging, among other things, to administer the Mello-Granlund Older Californians Act which establishes various programs that serve older individuals, including aging information and education programs.

This bill would establish the Senior Housing Information and Support Center within the department, for the purpose of providing information and training relating to specified subjects, including housing options and home modification alternatives designed to support independent living, and available innovative resources and senior services.

This bill would also 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 home modification information program be provided in the Budget Act provide that implementation of the bill would be subject to appropriations contained 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. A heading is added as Article 1  
2 (commencing with Section 9100) to Chapter 2 of Division  
3 8.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

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5 Article 1. General Provisions

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7 SEC. 2. Article 2 (commencing with Section 9115) is  
8 added to Chapter 2 of Division 8.5 of the Welfare and  
9 Institutions Code, to read:

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11 Article 2. Senior Housing Information and Support  
12 Center

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14 9115. There is in the California Department of Aging  
15 the Senior Housing Information and Support Center,  
16 which shall have the following functions:



1 (a) The center shall serve as a clearinghouse for  
2 information for seniors and their families regarding  
3 available innovative resources and senior services.

4 (b) (1) The center shall provide information or  
5 contract with another entity to provide information  
6 concerning housing options and home modification  
7 alternatives, to enable seniors to live independently or  
8 with their families as often as possible.

9 (2) The center shall distribute this information to each  
10 area agency on aging and to other appropriate entities  
11 throughout the state.

12 (c) The center shall promote education and training  
13 for professionals who work directly with seniors in order  
14 to maximize opportunities for independent living.

15 9116. The Director of the California Department of  
16 Aging shall appoint all necessary staff to carry out the  
17 provisions of this article.

18 *9117. Implementation of this article shall be subject to*  
19 *an appropriation in the annual Budget Act.*

20 SEC. 3. Chapter 4.5 (commencing with Section 9450)  
21 is added to Division 8.5 of the Welfare and Institutions  
22 Code, to read:

23

24 CHAPTER 4.5. HOME MODIFICATIONS FOR SENIORS

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26 9450. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the  
27 following:

28 (1) Thousands of California seniors are living with  
29 mobility and health problems and these numbers will  
30 increase as the state's population ages. Statistics show that  
31 50 percent of people over the age of 80 years are disabled  
32 in some manner.

33 (2) Most housing was not designed for people who are  
34 disabled, have lost strength, flexibility, or balance  
35 through aging, and who necessarily have become fearful  
36 or extremely cautious in their daily activities to avoid  
37 injury. Front steps, staircases, narrow doorways, low  
38 electric sockets, low light levels, round door handles, high  
39 kitchen cabinets, and bathrooms without grab bars or  
40 moveable shower heads pose hazards for the elderly. One



1 in three Americans over the age of 65 years suffers a fall  
2 each year, often in the home, which can cause serious  
3 injury and depression.

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

11 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature that the  
12 development of the “aging in place” concept be  
13 recognized and supported by the state, that funding for  
14 education and making home improvements be facilitated  
15 through public and private sources, and that  
16 recommendations for changes in home modification  
17 policies and information for home modification projects  
18 and products be developed.

19 9451. The department, in consultation with the  
20 commission, shall enter into a contract for the  
21 development of information and materials which shall be  
22 used to educate Californians on the concept of “aging in  
23 place” and the benefits of home modification. The  
24 contractor shall be a research-based university  
25 gerontology department with extensive experience and  
26 work with the concept of “aging in place” and the  
27 benefits of home modification.

28 9452. The department shall distribute the  
29 information developed pursuant to Section 9451 to each  
30 area agency on aging and to other appropriate entities  
31 throughout the state.

32 9453. The department, in cooperation with the entity  
33 contracting with the department pursuant to Section  
34 9451, shall sponsor regional training sessions, and  
35 seminars, using the materials developed pursuant to this  
36 chapter.

37 ~~9454. It is the intent of the Legislature that funding~~  
38 ~~for implementation of this chapter be provided in the~~  
39 ~~Budget Act.~~



1 9454. *Implementation of this chapter shall be subject*  
2 *to an appropriation in the annual Budget Act.*

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