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

DEPT: Community Services Agency

BOARD AGENDA # \*A-3d

Urgent  Routine

AGENDA DATE April 23, 2013

CEO Concur with Recommendation YES  NO   
(Information Attached)

4/5 Vote Required YES  NO

SUBJECT:

Proclamation of the Month of May 2013 as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Proclaim the Month of May 2013 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. 2013-162

On motion of Supervisor Withrow, Seconded by Supervisor Monteith  
and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Withrow, Monteith, De Martini and Chairman Chiesa

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. According to federal government estimates, as many as 5 million older, frail and vulnerable citizens are abused, neglected and exploited each year. 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 alone, Adult Protective Services received 132,918 reports of abuse to elders and dependent adults in 2012. In this same time period, Stanislaus County Adult Protective Services program received 1951 reports of abuse to elders and dependent adults. This is estimated to be only about one quarter of the abuse that actually occurs in California.

Whether the abuse is financial, physical, emotional or basic neglect, our senior citizens and disabled adults have the right to protection under the law. Statistics show that in 90 percent of all cases of abuse, the perpetrator is a family member, generally an adult child or grandchild. These family members are often motivated by a sense of entitlement. 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 cannot be ignored. All citizens, especially our most vulnerable citizens, deserve to live safe, secure lives, without fear, neglect, pain or exploitation whether they are living in their own homes or an assisted or skilled nursing facility.

In 2013, the Department is requesting that May is proclaimed as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month. As citizens of Stanislaus County, we must recognize and respond to the mistreatment of older people in whatever setting it occurs, so that the later years of life will be free from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Increasing awareness and education are the keys to addressing this issue. In Stanislaus County, the Stanislaus Elder Abuse Prevention Alliance (SEAPA) has created partnerships with 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 County. 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 topic. We all must work to break the silence. Proclaiming May as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month will increase the focus on awareness of elder and dependent adult abuse in Stanislaus County.

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**POLICY ISSUE:**

Proclaiming May, 2013 Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month. This proclamation will support 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:**

Kathryn M. Harwell, Director. Telephone: 558-2500

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**Month in Stanislaus County**

WHEREAS, seniors and dependent adults are valued member of society and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that they live safely and with dignity; and

WHEREAS, Every year, more than five (5) million disabled and elderly citizens in the United States are victims of physical and emotional abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation; and

WHEREAS, in California, more than 132,918 elders and vulnerable adults were the victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation in 2012.

WHEREAS, in Stanislaus County, Adult Protective Services received 1951 reports of abuse to elders and dependent adults in 2012 in Stanislaus County, 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 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, no aspect of our society-technology, agriculture, science, religion, sports, education-would enjoy its current prominence without the past contributions from our elders; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Stanislaus, State of California, does hereby proclaim May, 2013 as Stanislaus County Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month.