



Home	Bill Information	California Law	Publications	Other Resources	My Subscriptions	My Favorites
------	------------------	----------------	--------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------

**SCR-112 Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month.** (2021-2022)

SHARE THIS:  

**Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 112**

**CHAPTER 111**

Relative to Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month.

[ Filed with Secretary of State August 01, 2022. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

SCR 112, Dodd. Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month.

This measure would proclaim and acknowledge the month of June 2022 as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month in California and would reiterate the importance of annually recognizing Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month in the state.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, Elder and dependent adult abuse is a serious and growing crisis in California; and

WHEREAS, Not a day goes by without reports of horrific cases of abuse or exploitation of the elderly or adults with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Elder and dependent adult abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual, or fiduciary and consists of crimes that recognize no boundaries of economic, educational, or social status, gender, race, culture, religion, or geographic location; and

WHEREAS, In the United States, 10,000 people each day are turning 65 years of age. As of 2019, over 54,000,000 people are 65 years of age and older; and

WHEREAS, Californians older than 65 years of age are the fastest growing demographic. In 2021, it was estimated that 14.8 percent of California's total population, approximately 5,800,000 individuals, are 65 years of age and older; and

WHEREAS, One in 10 Americans 60 years of age and older experience abuse each year; and

WHEREAS, Nearly one in six seniors are food insecure and therefore face the threat of hunger or malnourishment. As a result, they may not know where their next meal is coming from or have access to healthy options; and

WHEREAS, The current estimates suggest that only one out of 24 incidents of elder mistreatment are reported by victims, with fewer than 15 percent of those harmed accessing formal support services each year; and

WHEREAS, Many younger seniors might not have enough money to support themselves in a home and therefore long-term care becomes a challenge. The percentage of elderly who are homeless rose from 22.9 percent in 2007 to 33.8 percent in 2017. The percentage increase among seniors 62 years of age and older who lived in emergency shelters or transitional housing increased by 69 percent from 2007 to 2017. The actual number grew by 76,000; and

WHEREAS, Older adults and adults with disabilities may be impacted by a constellation of physical, mental, pharmaceutical, or medical influences, any one of which could restrict their ability to protect themselves or self-advocate, to report to authorities when abuse occurs, or to testify against perpetrators; and

WHEREAS, Victims may be afraid of losing the relationship with the person who is harming them, ashamed that someone they trust has mistreated them, or believe that police and other agencies cannot help. Some elders will only seek help when the mistreatment is unendurable or so egregious that they are in danger, leaving victims without appropriate intervention and relief; and

WHEREAS, People with cognitive impairment are at increased risk of abuse due to their cognitive impairment, loss of capacity, communication challenges, and growing dependence on their caregivers; and

WHEREAS, One in every nine individuals over 65 years of age is living with Alzheimer's disease or dementia, 20 to 25 percent of the older adult population experience mild cognitive impairment, and one in two people with dementia experience some form of abuse by others; and

WHEREAS, During the COVID-19 pandemic, seniors experienced an increase in stress and isolation, both of which have been shown to be highly detrimental to health; and

WHEREAS, Abuse is most likely to occur to older adults who are isolated from their community; while it has been well publicized that older adults are at the highest risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19, they may also be at increased risk for negative consequences from the measures being enacted to protect them from the viral threat; and

WHEREAS, The necessary care and equipment for individuals with a disability must be offered to provide the maximum autonomy, protection, and accountability; and

WHEREAS, Research by the National Institute of Justice found that 11 percent of older adults reported experiencing at least one form of mistreatment, including emotional, physical, nutritional, or sexual mistreatment or neglect, in the past year; and

WHEREAS, Subtle indicators that abuse may be occurring include bruises or pressure marks, unexplained withdrawal from normal activities, a change in alertness, unusual depression, sudden changes in financial situations, strained or tense relationships, or frequent arguments; and

WHEREAS, Recognizing these signs is the first step toward the prevention of elder and dependent adult abuse; and

WHEREAS, Elders who experience abuse or mistreatment face a greater risk of impacting the health system or impacting the social service system; and

WHEREAS, Elder and dependent adult victims have a mortality rate three times that of the general public and are 300 percent more likely to die a premature death; and

WHEREAS, All older adults and adults with disabilities have the right to live safely in the least restrictive environment, whether in their homes or health care facilities and enjoy an optimum quality of life while being protected from all forms of injustice; and

WHEREAS, A comprehensive central data repository of all child abuse investigations has been in existence since 1965, but no similar repository exists for investigations of crimes against elderly and dependent adults; and

WHEREAS, Despite the rapidly expanding population of older adults and adults with disabilities, the State of California has only recently begun collecting comprehensive data on abuse cases, reports, or investigations, leaving the government with limited capacity to track existing trends and to make informed decisions about the strategic use of existing resources, let alone improve the reporting system, enhance protections, or give law enforcement partners the tools necessary to secure justice; and

WHEREAS, The lack of statewide elder and dependent adult abuse data prevents policymakers from measuring the extent of these crimes and tragedies; and

WHEREAS, Private citizens and public agencies must work to combat crime and violence against older adults and adults with disabilities by identifying and preventing social isolation, through the expansion and resourcing of home- and community-based long-term support and services programs, through increased law enforcement, increased public awareness, and expanding social service programs; and

WHEREAS, Restorative Justice aims to decrease the fear of older adults and increase the community's ability to respond to elder abuse by providing a safe environment to address the abuse in a fair and just way for everyone; and

WHEREAS, June 15 is recognized internationally as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, first established in 2006 to raise awareness of elder and dependent adult abuse and to promote a better understanding of the cultural, social, economic, and

demographic issues behind the growing incidence of elder and dependent adult abuse around the globe; and WHEREAS, All Californians are strongly encouraged to report suspected abuse of an elder or dependent adult by calling their local adult protective services agency, local Long-Term Care Ombudsman program, law enforcement, or emergency services agencies; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature proclaims and acknowledges the month of June 2022 as Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month and reiterates the importance of annually recognizing Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Awareness Month in the state; and be it further

Resolved, That California's recognition of elder and dependent adult abuse in June is consistent with the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day of June 15; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.