Our Values Unite Us

DIGNITY

INDEPENDENCE

JUSTICE

COMMUNITY

Celebrating 40 YEARS of IHSS

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UDW
The Homecare Providers Union

AFSCME Local 3930, AFL-CIO

Homecare Providers and Clients
United for Dignity and Independence
The creation of California’s In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program was a milestone in the disability rights movement. Before IHSS, those with long-term care needs had few options besides nursing homes and state institutions.

People with disabilities, motivated by a desire for independence and control of their own services and assistance, fought for a broader, client-directed homecare program. After a long struggle, Governor Ronald Reagan signed AB 134 in 1973, which created the program we now know as IHSS.

During this same time period, homecare providers were organizing for a better program and working conditions. In 1977, followers of Cesar Chavez formed an organizing committee that would later become the United Domestic Workers of America (UDWA).

Building a Better IHSS Program

The creation of the IHSS program was just the first step to improve quality of life for Californians with disabilities, the sick and the elderly. Many challenges remained.

Providers made minimum wage and did not have health benefits. Clients had a hard time finding caregivers because turnover was high.

In the 1980s and 90s, advocates, clients, and homecare providers worked together to build a better program.

1983 – Homecare providers received first-ever cost-of-living wage increases.

1993 – IHSS Public Authorities are formed, improving the delivery of services in the program and making them consistent throughout the state.

In 1999, a broad coalition of disability rights advocates, seniors, homecare providers, and clients secured the passage of AB 1682 which required every county to establish an employer of record for the purposes of collectively bargaining with IHSS providers. The new law also created an IHSS Advisory Committee to protect clients against losing hours of service, and enhanced clients’ rights to hire, fire, train and supervise their providers.
State budget trouble and politics at its worst led to tough times for the IHSS community in the mid-2000s.

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, elected in 2003, slashed funding for the program and tried to stop relatives from caring for their loved ones through IHSS. As part of the campaign to gut homecare, the governor and his allies falsely claimed there was massive fraud in the program.

Clients and providers pushed back together to protect the dignity of our loved ones and neighbors.
United for a Better Future

The attacks on the IHSS community have united us like never before. **We fought side-by-side, and continue to work towards building a better future.**

In 2013, client and provider organizations reached a settlement agreement in three lawsuits related to IHSS cuts. With this agreement and a better economic outlook, we can move forward together to restore the homecare program.

*We are committed to:*

- **Respect and dignity** for Californians with disabilities, the sick, and the elderly.
- **Fair pay** and respect for homecare providers.
- **Full funding** for life-saving programs like IHSS.

In 2010, we led the historic “March for California’s Future,” a 48-day, 350-mile march from Bakersfield to the State Capitol in Sacramento.

In 2012, we sent an important message together at the State Capitol: Homecare saves lives and money. Photo credit: James Hamilton
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