

Fractured Justice

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders
Fighting to Survive California's Budget Crisis

Hustisia para Todu

Partners of the Asian Pacific American Legal Center who made this collaboration possible include the following organizations:



Asian Pacific AIDS Intervention Team



Asian and Pacific Islander Older Adults Task Force



Asian Rehabilitation Service, Inc.



Korean Resource Center



Guam Resource Center



South Asian Network



Tongan Community Service Center



United Cambodian Community, Inc.



Filipino American Service Group, Inc.

Introduction

STEWART KWOH

As California struggles to contend with an unprecedented budget deficit, severe spending reductions threaten to collapse the state's service systems for low-income seniors, children and families. Like many underserved communities, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) have suffered as a result of the termination of health services, reductions to basic living assistance and cutbacks to California's education system. As the budget deficit continues to escalate, the Golden State's most vulnerable residents constantly fear the elimination of the vital services that prevent them from going hungry, losing their homes and for some, even ending their lives.

Fractured Justice chronicles the experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders impacted by California's harmful reductions to critical programs. Members of the community and nonprofit organizations serving vulnerable older adults and families highlight the need to curb the state's rampant budget deficit by demanding revenue-based solutions and deep budget reforms that will make effective government once again possible in California.

I extend my thanks to partners of the Asian Pacific American Legal Center who made this collaboration possible.



Stewart Kwoh

President and Executive Director

Asian Pacific American Legal Center



The Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI) provides cash assistance to California's lawfully present seniors and blind and disabled individuals.

CAPI, established under Republican Governor Pete Wilson, serves approximately 10,000 lawfully present immigrants. Similar to the CAPI program, the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP) offers nutrition assistance to lawfully present immigrants. For many of these programs' recipients, CFAP and CAPI grants serve as essential means of support. Throughout their tenure, these programs have consistently received bi-partisan approval because they have widely been seen as a way to keep vulnerable communities from going hungry or becoming homeless.

“...The support I receive from the [CAPI] program helps me to go places, such as the doctor's office. This is very important to me because I have been diagnosed with breast cancer and other health problems, including high blood pressure and cholesterol.”

SHARADA

My name is Sharada. I came to the United States in 1997 from Gujarat, India to be with my son and his family. I am 76 years old, and I receive assistance from the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI). Because of the help I receive from CAPI, I am able to buy groceries and pay for transportation. I do not have a car. So, the support I receive from the program helps me to go places, such as the doctor's office. This is very important to me because I have been diagnosed with breast cancer and other health problems, including high blood pressure and cholesterol.

Currently, my family and I are having financial trouble. My son works at a fast food restaurant, and my daughter-in-law takes care of me and her children. Because they are struggling, my children are not able to help me. The CAPI program is very important because I will become helpless if I don't have such a program to support me.

YONG HAK CHO

My name is Yong Hak Cho and I am a 70 year old senior living in a small apartment in Koreatown. About seven years ago, I visited Los Angeles and observed the great living conditions and educational services. As a result of this, five years ago I decided to immigrate to the United States with my family. Ever since we moved to the United States, I have applied for affordable senior apartment housing; however to this day I am still waiting for the answer while living in an expensive apartment without any benefits. My wife and I are working to support our expenses even though we are very old. My wife works as an assistant for the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program, and I am also working a part time job. Despite our efforts, we still cannot afford the expensive cost of living and we receive a monthly living benefit from the CAPI program.

Every year when the state government announces its budget proposal, I get very nervous. We always worry that the government will consider stopping the CAPI program. This would be a life threatening announcement for people like my family who are old and depend on government benefits for seniors. I believe any proposal that would consider cutting such a program is discrimination to all immigrants.

Last May 2009, the CAPI program was one of the many issues within the California budget-cut proposal. My usual \$860 benefit decreased by \$25, and now I currently get \$835 per month. Due to the current economic recession, my usual income for my part time job decreased while my monthly rent increased to \$1350. In addition to all of this, prices of daily necessities have increased making our financial situation incredibly tight and difficult.

I believe that budget cuts will continue to affect the CAPI program, and every time the government does decide to cut this program, I will be very stressed by the potential life-threatening results. I ask a big favor to the lawmakers—please, don't let the dreams of immigrants, who came to the United States with their American dream, vanish away. I believe that if everyone can achieve their dreams with fair government policies, the economy of the US will get better as well.



Yong Hak Cho

The federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and the State Supplementary Payment (SSP) programs provide cash assistance to low-income seniors and blind and disabled individuals.

VISHSNAH CRAGN



My name is Vishsnah Cragn. I am 58 years old, and I live alone on a fixed income. I receive \$845.00 per month on SSI. Because of the state crisis, my SSI benefits have been reduced by \$55.00 per month. That is \$660.00 per year. I have been a resident of the City of Long Beach for 28 years, and I find myself living check to check each month. In some cases, I'm unable to meet my daily needs. My rent has increased, and it is becoming harder for me to sustain a livable home. I eat lunch for free at the Cambodian Senior Nutrition Program Monday to Friday because I can't afford to buy groceries. I worry everyday about what might happen if my SSI continues to be reduced. I worry that I might become homeless.

IER CHEA KRUY

My name is Ier Chea Kruy and I am a survivor of the Killing Fields. After escaping the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, I was in a refugee camp in Thailand before coming to the U.S. in 1985.

As an immigrant senior, I already faced challenges before the recent budget cuts, but I could survive. Right now it's much more difficult. Currently, my wife and I each receive \$703 in monthly Supplementary Security Income (SSI), but it's barely enough to cover our basic needs. We have housing assistance, which helps, but we have to limit our other expenses, such as food. It's hard to buy quality food for two people at \$10 per day. Before, I could buy chicken for just \$1, but now it costs me \$3-4. So instead of eating chicken every day, I can only have it once every few days.

But it's not just food. Prices have gone up for everything—from utilities to haircuts. Now, when a relative passes away, I can barely contribute to the customary monetary gift of condolences for their funeral. I can't afford to help my family if more people pass away.

Vishsnah Cragn

The budget cuts affect my physical and emotional health in other ways. Due to lack of money and cuts to programs for seniors, we end up staying at home, especially since we can't speak English well. Without exercise and socialization, seniors will be depressed and more likely to get sick.

The way that legislators are cutting programs and benefits for seniors makes me feel like they want to kill us indirectly. It's important for immigrant seniors like me to have SSI because we left our homeland with nothing. Without some assistance, we would have died. From living in Cambodia, I have gardening skills but no resources to do anything with them. In the most powerful country in the world, I can't get a job to supplement my income because I'm too old and my skills are not needed.

I'm fortunate to have affordable housing, and even with that, I am barely surviving. But what about those who do not have housing assistance and only have SSI as their sole income?

To legislators, I ask that you please have compassion toward seniors and our desperate circumstances. Please allow us to not just survive but to live the rest of our days in dignity.

Mr. Kruy is a long-time participant of the Cambodian Senior Nutrition Program, which provides Cambodian lunches daily along with linguistically and culturally appropriate socialization activities for low-income Cambodian seniors in Long Beach. The program was formed by the Cambodian Senior Nutrition Collaborative, consisting of community-based organizations, social service providers, the City of Long Beach, Los Angeles County, and local community members, with program activities administered by the Asian & Pacific Islander Older Adults Task Force.

PREETAM KAUR

My name is Preetam Kaur. I am 75 years old, and my husband is 79 years old. My husband and I live in Artesia with my son, his wife and their children. My husband and I receive SSI benefits, but we live with my son to be able to afford food, clothing and housing. Help from SSI is very important to us. I don't know what we will do if we don't have this program. Our children cannot afford to financially support all of our needs. My only son works and my daughter-in-law can't work because she takes care of both my husband and I and their children. Financially, it will be very difficult, and we'll be out on the streets.



Ier Chea Kruy



Preetam Kaur



NY CHAN

My name is Ny Chan. I am Cambodian and a single mother of two children. I was receiving \$848.00 per month on SSI. Due to the cuts to the program, I now receive \$747.00 per month. My SSI has been reduced by \$98.00 per month, which is a total of \$1,176.00 per year. My total monthly expenses are \$850.00, which include rent, utilities, and food. I have fallen behind on some bills because of the cuts. Before, I was able to pay all of my necessities. Now, I worry. I'm looking for a smaller apartment for my family so that I will be able to pay my bills. I worry everyday and cannot sleep at night. I have become sick because I worry for my children. I hope that the government does not continue to reduce my SSI because I do not know what I will do.

Ny Chan

Medi-Cal provides 6.7 million low-income Californians with free or lower-cost medical insurance.

CESAR DE LEON

My name is Cesar de Leon, and I am 74 years old. I came to the United States in 1987. Although I was already in my late fifties, I worked for over 10 years before undergoing open heart surgery. The surgery weakened me, and I now go through dialysis treatments every week arising from kidney failure in 2008. Because of my work experience, I receive \$220 in social security. This helps add to the \$540 my wife and I each receive from SSI, but it is hardly sufficient to satisfy even our basic needs.

...We believe that seniors should at least be allowed a life of dignity...

The budget cuts to Medi-Cal have made my medication very expensive. Because of my health problems, I am prescribed many medications. In numerous cases, the co-pays are \$15, \$20, \$32 and \$35. I have no choice but to prioritize my medicines and scrimp on food and clothing. The government should have actually increased benefits for those who need it. Because of my dialysis, the medications have increased, and my health is failing, and yet we have to worry if we will be able to eat tomorrow.



Cesar De Leon

Many of my teeth are in a bad state of decay, but I have not been to the dentist in a long time, as I cannot afford to do so. I need eyeglasses, which I also cannot afford. This makes driving very difficult. The budget cuts have made it very hard for me and my wife to live a normal life. There is nothing else we can do but to rely on the kindness and charity of family members and friends. We believe that seniors should at least be allowed a life of dignity. As it now stands, the budget cuts for seniors' benefits have made that close to impossible.

...Several of my upper and lower teeth have become rotten, and I have suffered from a severe toothache that made me unable to sleep at night and unable to eat well...

JA AE CHOI

My name is Ja Ae Choi, and currently I am a 75 year old Medi-Cal beneficiary who resides in Koreatown. I am a low-income senior who works 20 hours a week in order to provide for my monthly living expenses. Recently, I have been having a very difficult time.

Several of my upper and lower teeth have become rotten, and I have suffered from a severe toothache that made me unable to sleep at night and unable to eat well. However, due to the budget cuts made by the Governor, beginning in July, Medi-Cal beneficiaries can no longer receive dental health benefits. Because of this, I could not go to my dentist in fear of the health care costs and instead silently endured my pain. After a couple days, I finally could no longer bare the pain and went to go see my dentist. The dentist informed me that he needed to pull out my rotten teeth, and that I needed to get implantations. Even though it would only be a partial implantation, it would cost about \$2,000 dollars. What worried me more was not the pain that I must continue to endure but rather how I could afford such high costs. Two thousand dollars for a low-income senior is an insurmountable cost. Currently, I cannot eat well due to my toothache, but if I do not have any teeth, I will not be able to eat at all. As time passes, I will become malnourished, and my body will be vulnerable to a number of illnesses.



Ja Ae Choi

Many of us have come to the United States in pursuit of a better life. Even now I still have pride in my belief that the United States is the greatest country. I know that there is no such thing as a perfect world but we still hope and dream for improvement. We must fix what needs to be fixed and reform what we need to reform, and thus I have strong faith that our struggle will create a better society for us and our future generations.

The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program provides domestic assistance and medical care to low-income Californians who are over 65, disabled or blind.

SARIN CHAN



Sarin Chan

My name is Sarin Chan. I am 69 years old, and I live alone. I am a recipient for In Home Supportive Services, and I have a provider who takes care of me. I am physically disabled and cannot do many things such as drive to the doctor or groceries. I depend on someone to take me around the City of Long Beach to do my errands; in some cases, the caretaker has to do them for me. I also depend on someone to clean my house and wash my clothes. This helps me become a better person because by myself I cannot do many things. My caretaker already had hours cut from helping me. I used to have 90 hours per month of help and now it is down to 64 hours per month. She only comes now three times a week; before, she was able to come almost every day. I urge the government of California not to cut In Home Supportive Services or reduce funding for this program. I am old and scared because who will help around the house? Who will take care of me? I do not want to die!

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KIOLA LOMU

Malo e lelei. My name is Kiola Lomu. My husband's name is Mosese. We moved here from the islands of Tonga in 1976, and since then he has worked as a custodian for the church and at the community college. During that time, I was working as a security guard at the airport and a school, and I also worked with the Pacific Islander Community Council.

Three years ago, Mosese had a stroke and became paralyzed in half of his body. This has been very hard for my family because he was the center of the family, a strong man. Now, the rest of us need to pitch in more to help him with his therapies and try to support each other how he supported us.

Shortly after my husband became ill, my son David quit his job at the airport to help take care of him. For three years, my son helped care for Mosese while I worked to pay the bills. My security post at a local high school was the only job in the family. This fall, David applied to the IHSS program to try to get some payment for the work he had already been doing for the last three years and to help the family financially. Because of cutbacks to IHSS, his application was denied.

Our family is working very hard to make enough to live; we do not have too much. My husband needs a lot of help, but he is improving a lot. If we could spend more time helping with his therapies, he would be even better. I thought this is what the program is for. Getting denied has made me very upset. I was confused. When I spoke to the social worker, she told me that I could pay my own son to take care of my husband. That did not make any sense to me.

I left my job so that my son could have the opportunity to work. Three years is too long for David to go without a job. I think this will be a long process, and I want my son to have a life. So, we made some big changes so that Mosese can get the care he needs.



Kiola Lomu

I think that this program is important. Some families have accidents or health problems. My husband was in the nursing home for a while, but it is better that he is home. These services let my family make sure he gets the care he needs. Our family is already burdened trying to make a living.

“...Because of cutbacks to IHSS, his application was denied...”

The AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) offers medication assistance to low-income Californians. In 2009, Governor Schwarzenegger eliminated HIV Prevention, Education, Testing and Monitoring Services.



Chris Campos

CHRIS CAMPOS

My name is Chris Campos. I am 73 years old. I was diagnosed HIV positive in 1993. I eat the right foods and get a good amount of rest. I cut back on certain Filipino foods for the benefit of my health. One of the most important things is that I keep busy and always make sure I have something to do. In 1995, I became aware of the Asian Pacific AIDS Intervention Team (APAIT) in Los Angeles. It was then that I started to take advantage of the support groups and services they provide. My time at APAIT has made a great impact on my life and health. My time also, in turn, has also made a positive impact on the lives of others I have met through APAIT. APAIT empowered me and I have become sort of like a health advocate, as side effects of the medication are hard to deal with.

The staff and people here are always willing to talk and spend their time with you. I was very closeted before I came here. But APAIT helped me gain confidence to face reality. The APAIT treatment advocate* explained a lot to me, which addressed my hesitation on many things. If these services were taken away it would be a useless situation and people would lose hope. It would be a great loss as clients would lose their support system and the clients' families will lose this support system, too. It is hard to believe these budget cuts left and right are happening in the United States.

*Due to state budget cuts, the Treatment Advocacy program was eliminated.

The Healthy Families Program provides low-cost medical insurance for children.

JONG RAN KIM

My name is Jong Ran Kim, and I would like to first introduce my family of seven. My 13 year old son Woo Suk is very reliable. My 11 year old son Woo Il is quiet and cute. My 8 year old daughter Lucy is very clever and adorable. My 6 year old son Issac is very gentleman like. My 4 year old son Edward is a darling, and finally my husband works diligently for our family. The most difficult and challenging part of my life is keeping my dear children healthy.

My eldest 2 children were born in Korea while the rest of my children were born in the United States after my family immigrated to America 9 years ago. Although we do not have a very sufficient life financially, watching my children grow healthy makes my life happy and satisfied.

Currently, our children are receiving Healthy Families benefits from the state of California. However during this past summer, due to the state budget cuts, Healthy Families refused to accept new enrollment, and this crisis has led to parents, such as myself, to be terrified that the health benefits for our children could be stopped at any time.

Due to the dangers of the swine flu, this year especially was a critical period for our seniors and children. The dangers of the flu did not escape my children. Early this October, my eldest son was sick with the flu, and it spread to the rest of my children. As a result of this, for 2 weeks my family had a very difficult time trying to get treated for the flu. My eldest son, Woo Suk, had a very persistent high fever, and when we visited the hospital, I found out that he had the swine flu. After seeing the doctor and getting his prescription at 9 o'clock in the morning, I went to the nearest pharmacy to get the prescribed medicine. However, the pharmacy did not carry the prescribed children's medicine, and because time was critical before the flu got worse, I had to take my ill child with me all day long to get the needed medicine. Finally at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, we were able to get the medicine, and I also found out that without insurance, the medicine would cost \$120.

At that time, if there were no children's health benefits or had the 5 year immigrant waiting period been in place, a dreaded result may have happened to my child, which is unbearable to imagine. I believe it is immoral that children's health benefits,



Jong Ran Kim

which should always be nurtured and protected, are continuously targeted, debated, and threatened whenever the issue of state budget cuts arises.

Children are our future. We should not forget that it is the duty of the California government to support and provide an environment where children can build a flourishing and healthy community.

California's Education System provides children with the necessary tools for success.

PENG OV

Hello, my name is Peng Ov. I just graduated from Downtown Magnets High School in June 2009. My parents are Teochew or Chiu Chow Chinese immigrants from Cambodia, but I have lived in Los Angeles' Chinatown my entire life. I am currently attending Los Angeles Community College. I am trying to major in Radiologic Technology. I want to go into the medical field because I am inspired by my family, who are all in the medical field and enjoy what they do.

The budget cuts affect me in school by not allowing me to take the classes I need to get my general education so I can transfer to a university or take the classes I need to start my major. This means that I have to stay at least another year, so I can finish. The budget cuts also do not help the school at all. They increase class size, which means less time for me to actually have one-on-one time with my professors. Many professors have lost their jobs, and that also means that the subjects they teach are not available to students who want to learn. That's really difficult for me because this year is my first year, and I do not know what to do.



Peng Ov

In the midst of an economic downturn, California's Nonprofit Organizations face limited funding opportunities.

JOEY QUENGA

The Guam Communications Network (GCN), established in 1993 as a nonprofit organization, serves the Chamorro community, a group indigenous to Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. Significant challenges face the Chamorro community, including high school completion rates among youth that are below the Los Angeles County average. Fifteen percent of the community lives in poverty, and our families and seniors participate in health and social services at rates higher than the state average. As a result, the economic downturn and state budget cuts have greatly harmed the Chamorro community.

Serving the community for over 17 years, GCN has evolved from a cultural entity to the sole Chamorro community-based multi-service agency in the nation. Through our various programs and services, which are grant and subcontract funded, GCN has provided opportunities for the Chamorro community to have their voices heard and their needs met. We have created opportunities for cultural and language preservation, social service development, economic development, health education, cancer awareness and services as well as community-based participatory research.

With the economic downturn, many of these opportunities have dwindled, forcing us to rethink our strategy for program and agency sustainability. Decreased funding and the elimination of community programs have created a financial challenge for our agency and have threatened the existence of programs and resources that have been available to the Chamorro community. As a result, we have lost staffing, eliminated some programs and decreased our hours of operation.

In efforts to sustain our programs and agency, we have changed the way we do business. Instead of applying for grants solely for our agency, we are now involved with and are seeking partnerships for various grant submissions. Many funders with whom we work also have experienced a downturn in their financial portfolio and have either discontinued their grant programs in their entirety or have restructured their guidelines to promote collaborations. Instead of receiving full funding as a sole grantee, we are now sharing collaborative funding.



Joey Quenga

Todu

California offers **Regional Centers** with offices located across the state that serve individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

HAU PUNG LEE

My name is Hau Pung Lee, and I speak English and Cantonese. I am polite and interested in working. I came to Asian Rehabilitation Service, Inc (ARS) about three years ago and participated in the Supported Employment Program to further my employment skills as well as to seek a job placement that is appropriate for me. At ARS, I have a job coach who supports and guides me. As a result, I am one of the most dependable assembly persons that the supervisors at the cosmetics warehouse can count on. On the job, I am very diligent and careful at the tasks I am working on and during break time, peers and employees know that I am very friendly to be around.

I love tour buses and my family will take me on road trips just so I can ride on them. I wish to drive one some day; unfortunately that dream will always be one driver's license away. I have autism, a couple of the symptoms of autism are ritualism and fixation, which means my routine cannot be altered or changed. If my routine is altered it can create a lot of distress for me. Because of this, my physicians and family worry that I would not know what to do and how to react at any given situation that may occur on the street. In addition, though I speak English, I do not comprehend everything that people say. This is another great concern that my physicians and family have. Due to these obstacles, even taking public transportation by myself to work is an unsafe option.

Everyday, the transportation that is funded by the regional center will go to my house, pick me up and take me to work, and then pick me up again after work and take me home. Due to the California budget cut, I was about to lose my transportation services. The regional center wanted my parents to teach me how to take public transportation to reduce costs as well as promote independence. However, because of my disabilities this is neither a safe nor realistic option. ARS staff, my parents and my service coordinator wrote numerous letters documenting the severity of the situation and the hardship it would impose on my transportation services if my services were cut.



Hau Pung Lee

Due to those efforts I continue to work, socialize, and learn with the people around me; as well as bring home a paycheck to help support my family.

Although there is a happy ending for me, there are many people like me who are close to losing their services or have already lost them. When services like transportation, job coaching hours, and other support services from rehabilitation centers like ARS are cut, it limits our potential and restricts many possibilities that persons with disabilities could achieve.

Low-income Californians are coping with **Multiple Budget Cuts**, ranging from their health insurance to their living assistance.

CARMEN DE LEON

My name is Carmen de Leon, and I am 69 years old. Because of the budget cuts, my husband and I are down to just two meals a day. The reduction of SSI and Medi-Cal benefits due to the economic crisis has made it difficult for us to survive. After rent, food and necessities, there is very little left for much else. Our clothes are hand me downs from our children, and the cold weather does not help.

My husband and I used to receive about \$1280 a month from SSI, but with the cut in our benefits, we now receive only \$1080 each month. Our rent for our small studio alone is \$700. However, the greatest effect of the budget cuts has been the elimination of vision care under Medi-Cal and the introduction of monthly fees and co-pays for our medication. I have tendonitis in my elbows. I also suffer from glaucoma and need new eyeglasses, but I cannot visit the doctor because we cannot afford it. I will need an operation soon because I have flashes of partial blindness, and I see dark spots when I try to read the newspaper or find my way to the corner 7-11 to buy some groceries.

Because of the cuts to Medi-Cal, my husband and I are struggling to afford new monthly fees for prescriptions. In addition to the \$32 monthly fee to be members of the Humana Prescription Drug Plan, we are also being charged increments of \$1, \$2, \$5, and up to \$32 for our medication. I want to work, but I can't. With my vision clouded by the glaucoma and the tendonitis in my elbows, it is difficult for me



Carmen De Leon

to find any job that will require some physical work. Not only have they reduced our monthly allowance, but they have increased our expenses. Where are we going to get the money for our medicine? We cannot live like this.

...Because of the budget cuts, my husband and I are down to just two meals a day. The reduction of SSI and Medi-Cal benefits due to the economic crisis has made it difficult for us to survive...

MEMORIA LINIS-DAVIS

My name is Memoria Linis-Davis. I am 75 years old, disabled and rely on the aid of a walker. I am fully bilingual in Tagalog and English and graduated from a private university in the Philippines in Business Management, majoring in Accounting. I worked in the US Navy for 10 years, where I worked as a compensation analyst and billing and collections clerk. In 2003, I was forced to retire, as my health began to decline. I now suffer from arthritis, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, a host of allergies and have survived two encounters with breast cancer.



Memoria Linis-Davis

Due to the budget cuts, my SSI has been cut severely, and I have also seen a decline in my social security benefits. I am fortunate to rent a subsidized low-income apartment room for \$234 a month. However, with the cuts to Medi-Cal, I am struggling to get by. I need glasses and dentures, but I cannot afford either because vision and dental benefits were eliminated under Medi-Cal. My co-pays for doctor visits have gone up. As a result, I do not have enough money for my regular consultations for my high cholesterol, blood pressure and allergies. I am also scaling back on my medications because of the new co-pays required on all of my medicines.

To stay active, I participate in senior activities at the Everlasting Adult Health Care Center. Due to the cuts to adult day care programs for seniors, the Everlasting senior center is close to bankruptcy. Because the California Government has not been sending money for the operation of the Center regularly, the Center has begun to lay off staff. Worse, they have severely limited the types of seniors who can access the Center's facilities. To qualify, seniors must be extremely sick and suffering from asthma, diabetes and other chronic diseases. I may eventually fail to qualify. I may be short on money, but if they don't allow me to have some form of adult interaction and activity, I will be forced to stay at home and remain idle. If an old person does nothing and has no form of mental or physical activity, this oftentimes leads to senility. I don't want to deteriorate mentally; I still have a good few years left in me!