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May 17, 2021

Honorable Lorena Gonzalez
Chair, Appropriations Committee
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 523 (NAZARIAN) as amended May 3, 2021 SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Gonzalez:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports AB 523**. This bill is scheduled to be heard before Assembly Appropriations Committee.

AB 523 would make permanent, regulatory flexibilities provided to all Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) organizations during the COVID-19 public health emergency that have allowed PACE organizations to safely care for and provide services to the frail seniors that PACE organizations serve. AB 523 directs the DHCS to make permanent the care flexibilities including:

- (1) Telehealth.
- (2) PACE enrollment agreements.
- (3) Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) services provided in the home.
- (4) Involuntary disenrollment – Out of Service Area.
- (5) Facility beds.
- (6) Marketing.
- (7) Marketing exams.

During the COVID-19 health emergency PACE organizations have modified the ways in which they deliver care to their participants in order to keep their participants safe. PACE organizations have successfully responded to the COVID-19 health emergency by implementing rigorous infection control measures and quickly transitioning from providing center focused care to home based care. These modifications have been done with the approval of the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) the state and federal regulators of PACE organizations.

The PACE model and the flexibilities in care have resulted in significantly better health outcomes for PACE participants during the COVID-19 health emergency than comparable nursing home populations. For these reasons, DRC supports this bill. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sawait Seyoum". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sawait Seyoum
Senior Legislative Advocate
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Honorable Sydney Kamlager, California State Assembly
Neda Ashtari, Legislative Director, Office of Assemblymember
Kamlager