

1 [Supporting Assembly Bill 324, the Elder Economic Dignity Act of 2009]

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3 **Resolution supporting the California State Assembly Bill 324, the Elder Economic**  
4 **Dignity Act of 2009 .**

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6 WHEREAS, California State Assembly Bill 324 (AB 324), the Elder Economic Dignity  
7 Act of 2009 would institute the Elder Economic Security Standard Index (Elder Index) to  
8 assess and plan for the economic needs of California’s burgeoning aging population; and,

9 WHEREAS, Using publicly available state and federal data sources, the Elder Index is  
10 a new tool that accurately quantifies the cost of meeting *basic* needs for retired, older adults  
11 in each county of California; and

12 WHEREAS, AB 324 would require the Elder Index to be used in 1) planning  
13 documents by Area Agency on Aging and the California Department of Aging; 2) determining  
14 eligibility for new California State needs-based program; 3) identifying seniors in economic  
15 need (i.e. as a case management tool in the Linkages program); and,

16 WHEREAS, AB 324 would further require the State to annually update the Elder Index  
17 and calculate number of seniors living below the Elder Index, using the existing formulas;  
18 and,

19 WHEREAS, Legislators at both the local and state level struggle to create effective  
20 policies to promote economic security and eradicate poverty because they do not have an  
21 accurate picture of what it really takes to make ends meet in today’s economy; and

22 WHEREAS, Policymakers typically measure poverty, allocate limited resources and  
23 determine benefits’ eligibility using the Federal Poverty Line (FPL) and the FPL is a 1963  
24 measure based *solely* on the cost of a bare-bones food diet and the FPL is a flat dollar

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1 amount—\$10,830 for an individual living alone in 2009—whether one lives in a high cost  
2 market like urban San Francisco, or a low cost one like rural Arkansas; and,

3 WHEREAS, The Elder Index sets a new benchmark of income adequacy for older  
4 adults and provides the true cost of meeting basic needs and maintaining independence in  
5 the community; and,

6 WHEREAS, By institutionalizing this tool, AB 324 will empower policymakers to  
7 allocate limited resources more effectively, prepare for the needs of seniors and aging baby  
8 boomers, enable direct service providers to identify seniors struggling to cover their costs,  
9 and refer them to appropriate resources; and,

10 WHEREAS, By updating the Elder Index annually, AB 324 will help adults of *any* age  
11 make informed decisions about *when* and *where* to retire, how much to save now, and  
12 whether to continue working even after formally “retiring,” and;

13 WHEREAS, While having no impact on eligibility for current programs, AB 324 would  
14 allow policymakers to use an updated, more accurate, and localized measurement to set  
15 income standards for future programs; and,

16 WHEREAS, AB 324 is a vital step to enable older Californians to age with dignity and  
17 economic well-being and by enacting AB 324, California would once again demonstrate its  
18 leadership in setting visionary policies for the 21st Century; and,

19 WHEREAS, The City and County of San Francisco is currently considering legislation  
20 instituting a pilot program for the Community Living Fund to use the Elder Index to collect  
21 data, develop protocols, and plan generally for use of a broader measure of poverty across all  
22 City Programs which on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 090328 and  
23 is hereby declared to be a part of this resolution as if set forth fully herein; now, therefore,  
24 be it

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1           RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco by and through its Board of  
2 Supervisors hereby supports Assembly Bill 324; and, be it

3           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors shall forward a  
4 fully conformed copy of this resolution to San Francisco's state legislative delegation as well  
5 as the President pro Tem of the California Senate and Speaker of the California Assembly.  
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