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Subject: Who Can Afford to Get Old?

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WEBINAR:

*The California
Coordinated Care
Initiative: Consumer
Protections and Benefits
Package Summary*

Tues., April 21, 2015
10 - 11 AM PT

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**Who Can Afford to Get Old? Justice in Aging Testifies
at Senior Poverty Hearing**

Justice in Aging Executive Director Kevin Prindiville testified on March 17 before the Assembly Committee on Aging and Long-Term Care in Sacramento, CA. [The hearing "Who Can Afford to Get Old? Senior Poverty in the Golden State"](#) provided a welcome forum for highlighting the many challenges California's poor elders face living in a state with such a high cost of living. During the recession, California cut the State Supplementary Payment (SSP), dropping poor seniors below the federal poverty line.

A coalition of groups is working together to urge the governor to restore and update SSP. Sandy and Myrtle (you may remember them [from this video](#)) also testified at the hearing, sharing moving stories of their anything-but-golden years in poverty.

We are grateful to our partners that helped organize and presented at this hearing: Californians for SSI (CA4SSI), Western Center on Law and Poverty, Insight Center for Community Economic Development, and The California Budget & Policy Center.

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A 5-Step Plan for Fighting Poverty

“When we talk about fighting poverty in the United States, the conversation is often focused on preventative measures such as education or jobs...However, when it comes to an increasing population of low-to-no-income seniors, many preventative measures come too late. Education and retraining initiatives, savings plans, and job creation programs won’t help someone in her 70s or 80s who is struggling just to cover room and board after a lifetime of low-wage labor. But it’s not too late to protect the rights of seniors to a basic living. For this growing demographic of aging poor, we cannot hold up our hands and say we should have helped them 50 years ago, or helped their parents a century ago. We must, and we can, take action.” Read more from A 5-Step Plan for Fighting Poverty below.

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“I Can’t Pay That: Social Security Overpayments” Minnesota Advocate Training

Legal advocates in Minnesota have noticed a disturbing pattern over the last several years – more and more seniors have been hit with high overpayment claims by the Social Security Administration (SSA). When their clients work to appeal these claims, they experience roadblocks at every turn. Justice in Aging has been working to fix problems with the appeals process at SSA so the Minnesota advocates knew we could help them. Seeking to educate the community and organize systemic advocacy on the issue, the Minnesota Legal Services State Support Center planned a day-long, statewide training in March and invited Justice in Aging attorney Kate Lang as a special guest and presenter. Kate provided an overview of the overpayment problem, explained the rights seniors have to file appeals in these kinds of cases, and discussed ways the local advocates can engage in federal advocacy to solve this problem in Minnesota and across the country.

Better Today, Thanks to the ACA

March 23, 2015 marked the five-year anniversary since the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was signed into law in 2010. The law is working and continues to improve health care quality and access. It's easy to forget that the improvements we now take for granted were not around just a few years ago. On its fifth birthday, we remembered to **celebrate five things that are better today because of the ACA**:

1. Newly created consumer assistance programs are helping low-income seniors.
2. Community services will be delivered in settings that are truly community in nature.
3. Uninsured young Baby Boomers have new access to much-needed health care coverage.
4. Medicare beneficiaries continue to save money on prescription drugs.
5. Preventive care is now available to Medicare beneficiaries for free.

Justice in Aging Presents at Aging in America Conference

Kevin and Paul represented Justice in Aging at the **Aging in America Conference in Chicago**, IL at the end of March. The annual conference, **hosted by the American Society on Aging**, provides an excellent opportunity to connect with and learn from the leaders and experts in the field, keeping us informed of the latest developments. Kevin spoke to how we can better serve the country's LGBT seniors and Kevin and Paul presented on the need for action to help our nation's poor seniors. Read more about Kevin's impressions from the conference below.

Armstrong Decision is Bad for Poor Seniors

The belief that poor seniors should have at least the same access to justice as big business was compromised by the Supreme Court's March 31 decision in *Armstrong v. Exceptional Child Center*. The decision rejected Idaho health care providers' attempt to enforce a provision of the Medicaid Act that requires states to ensure that doctors and other Medicaid-participating providers are adequately paid—denying access to justice for poor people, even though corporations have been given similar access in the past.

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A Victory in the Fight for LGBT Long-Term Care Rights

In 2011, we worked with a coalition of LGBT advocacy organizations to put a stake in the ground for LGBT seniors with our groundbreaking report "*LGBT Older Adults in Long-Term Care Facilities: Stories from the Field*." Four years later, San Francisco's Board of Supervisors voted March 31 on the first-ever Bill of Rights Ordinance for LGBT seniors in long-term care facilities. *The ordinance*, endorsed by Justice in Aging and unanimously approved by the Supervisors, makes it illegal to discriminate against long-term care residents based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or HIV status.

Watch interviews with Bay Area LGBT seniors expressing their concerns about long-term care facilities and the discrimination that takes place, and their hopes for future changes.

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In Review is a monthly publication of Justice In Aging. [Vanessa Barrington](#), editor, [Katrina Cohens](#), design & circulation. Justice In Aging is a non-profit organization whose principal mission is to protect the rights of low-income older adults.

Through advocacy, litigation, and the education and counseling of local advocates, we seek to ensure the health and economic security of those with limited income and resources, and to preserve their access to the courts. We have offices in Los Angeles and Oakland, CA and in Washington, DC. For more information, visit our Web site at www.justiceinaging.org. To contact us, write info@justiceinaging.org.

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