

(November 8, 2011)

## Seniors rally in Poway against state funding cuts

**By Pat Kumpan**

A rally to protest budget cuts that would close 300 Adult Day Health Care Centers in California, attracted close to 150 supporters Tuesday in a parking lot outside Poway Adult Day Health Care Center in the Poway Business Park.



Seniors from throughout the region rallied in Poway Tuesday to protest cuts in Medi-Cal support for Adult Day Health Care Centers. Photo by Beverley Brooks

Protesters said they were outraged by the state's decision to eliminate Medi-Cal funding on Dec. 1, money that helps pay for the care for nearly 35,000 frail and elderly statewide.

Kathryn Holt, who owns the Poway ADHC, said she was amazed at Tuesday's support from the City of Poway, other care centers and the public, as her center's parking lot at 12250 Crosthwaite Circle filled up.

Holt told the crowd that the decision by Gov. Jerry Brown to halt funding was "a horrible mistake.

"This is unjust, ethically wrong," she told protesters.

Those who attend the Poway center and Ameri Care in San Marcos, another ADHC center, held signs shaped like stop signs, and one woman's sign said she did not want to be left alone.

Holt spoke about her own grandmother, Faye Needham, who would have lived out the rest of her life in a skilled nursing facility had Holt not decided to open her own ADHC center 10 years ago.

"I opened it not just because of the care, but the socialization," Holt added. "There's a total lack of understanding how this service is needed."

Her grandmother's health improved because of her attendance at ADHC sessions, she said.

"Most of the care for 120 seniors who come to Poway ADHC is funded by Medi-Cal," Holt said. "The care includes physical and occupational therapy, exercise and socialization."

The center is a huge safety net for seniors because it allows so many of them to remain at home, typically with family members as caregivers, and a few days of attending activities at the center.

For most, that balance is a healthy one because it also allows people like Marsha Linehan and her husband, Bob, a respite from the care they provide for Marsha's sister, Anita Moss.

Moss had a stroke at age 53 and cannot verbalize as she did before the stroke.

“She’s improved because of the care through ADHC in Poway,” Linehan said. “It’s amazing how much better she is.”

Poway Deputy Mayor Jim Cunningham joined the rally and told supporters he objected to forcing seniors into overcrowded facilities, such as nursing homes.

That would likely happen if ADHC centers are eliminated, he said.

Cutting funding for ADHC facilities on Dec. 1, said Cunningham, “cuts across political lines” and called the state’s decision a “garbage policy.”

Cunningham said he thought the Legislature “better repeal this — don’t let Dec. 1 come and say, we fought a good fight.

“Don’t give up,” Cunningham encouraged the protesters.

Holt and others are waiting to hear litigation results, which are expected next Tuesday.

An advocacy group, Disability Rights California, is challenging the state’s decision to cut funding for ADHCs.

If successful, those results could offer adequate and appropriate replacement services, instead of closing the centers.

Holt suggests that those who support keeping the ADHC centers operational with state funding should write to their legislators.



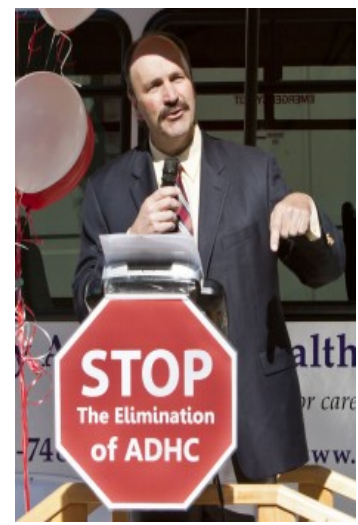
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Ruth Farladeau at the ADHC Rally in Poway. Photos by Beverley



Kathryn Holt speaking at the ADHC Rally Photos by Beverley Brooks



Poway Deputy Mayor Jim Cunningham. Photos by Beverley