

Letter: El Dorado County seniors deserve better

Publisher's note: This letter was sent to the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors in advance of the June 1 budget hearing. The author is the former director of the county Human Services Department, worked for the county for 30 years and helped build all of the senior programs.

Dear members of the board:

Regarding Monday's budget discussion, I know you have much to consider. So, briefly:

If you follow all of the staff budget recommendations regarding Community Services Senior Programs, the county will effectively begin disassembling a vital senior continuum of care that took more than 40 years to build.

When Community Services stood as a separate department, its percentage of administrative costs ran about half what currently is being charged for administration by the Health and Human Services Agency. In other words, there are certainly better ways of doing business that would save county resources and save services for seniors.

Note that, while the recommended budget requests an appropriation of \$3.9 million for Health and Human Services Agency Administration, the actual amount proposed to be spent on administration appears to exceed \$8.1 million. A significant amount of what is being spent is being drawn out of Community Services.

Thousands of our county's seniors are depending on your continued support, as are their families, hundreds of volunteers and a very dedicated, hard working, capable, modestly-paid direct service staff who embody what public

service should be about. The challenges faced by elders and their families are substantial and the services are critical to their well-being.

If you remember Moni Gilmore, please give seniors the support she would have asked from you. If you never met her, ask someone who knew her.

Thank you. I'll be glad to meet with you on any of the above points.

John Litwinovich, former EDC employee