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## California Voters: ‘Release and Implement the Master Plan for Aging as Part of COVID-19 Response’

**Achieving Master Plan goals is the strategy to support older adults and families today**

**(Sacramento, CA)** – Over the past months, the COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally shaken the nation’s social, demographic, political, economic, and health care landscapes with more than 4.8 million cases and 157,631 deaths nationally as of August 6.<sup>1</sup> Older adults have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 with people age 65 and older representing nearly 80 percent of COVID-19 related deaths, and people age 85 and older representing 32 percent of deaths.<sup>1</sup>

A recent statewide survey supported by The SCAN Foundation shows that the virus is indeed the most important issue to California voters and yet, **a supermajority of all voters (69.3%) decisively support California leadership delivering a Master Plan for Aging this year and presenting its vision for implementation.**

Further, the survey shows that well over a majority of voters (61.6%) feel that the pandemic has made it more urgent for California’s elected leaders to focus on the Master Plan, with nearly 60 percent feeling that the state should be held accountable for, and invest in, the Master Plan’s goals and priorities.

“California voters know all too well that the coronavirus has exposed vulnerabilities in the systems serving aging loved ones and our communities,” said [Bruce Chernof, MD](#), President and CEO of The SCAN Foundation and a member of the Master Plan [Stakeholder Advisory Committee](#). “It is critical for the state to release its Master Plan for Aging this year and put the recommendations into action.”

In June 2019, Governor Newsom [signed an Executive Order calling for the state’s first comprehensive, coordinated Master Plan for Aging](#) to prepare the state for the aging population growth, in order to ensure that Californians can age with dignity and independence. While the Master Plan efforts were on hold due to the pandemic from mid-March through the end of May, the engagement efforts have resumed, and the state intends to release the plan by late 2020.

### Keeping the Master Plan Real and Responsive

In numbers rarely seen in statewide polls, nearly 8 in 10 voters say that it is important to develop a system for aging Californians that is easy to navigate (78.6%). And more than 60 percent of voters are supportive of a Master Plan that addresses the needs of California’s aging population—particularly in the areas of health care, food security, and housing.

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC covid data tracker. 2020; <http://www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/index.html>. Accessed August 6, 2020.

The Master Plan has four goal areas, which these voters' priorities directly relate to:

- Services and supports
- Livable communities and purpose
- Health and well-being
- Economic security and safety

“What makes these numbers especially compelling is their rarity—we seldom see such high numbers and to achieve these levels of support requires bipartisan agreement as well as enthusiasm among NPP (independent) voters,” said Justin Wallin, CEO of J. Wallin Opinion Research. “Moreover, support for the Master Plan for Aging has been consistent both before and during COVID-19, reflecting an enduring alignment with California voters’ needs and priorities.”

### ***Survey Methodology***

From June 18-29, 2020, J. Wallin Opinion Research conducted a telephone survey of voters throughout California. One thousand respondents were interviewed using live, professional interviewers, speaking Spanish and English languages and calling both mobile and landlines; 56 percent of this survey was completed on mobile phones. A survey of this size yields a margin of error of +/-3.1% (95% confidence interval). Our sample is stratified, meaning that the demographic composition of our results matches the demographic composition of the region that we surveyed.

### ***About The SCAN Foundation***

The SCAN Foundation is an independent public charity dedicated to creating a society where older adults can access health and supportive services of their choosing to meet their needs. Our mission is to advance a coordinated and easily navigated system of high-quality services for older adults that preserve dignity and independence. For more information, visit [www.TheSCANFoundation.org](http://www.TheSCANFoundation.org).

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