

## Forget Us Not: Keep the Promise of the Dignity Fund



### Background:

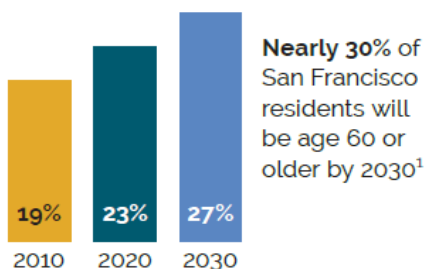
When San Francisco voters overwhelmingly approved [Proposition I, the Dignity Fund, in November 2016](#), they helped establish a path for stabilized funding for services & supports for seniors & people with disabilities. Key was the promise that funding would grow by \$3 million each year, in part to keep pace with the growing number and needs of seniors and people with disabilities in San Francisco. But the Dignity Fund legislation, on insistence of both the Mayor's Office and the City Controller, included language that the annual allocation *could* be suspended if the City's budget had a significant shortfall. At the time, the City budget was growing strongly and it didn't seem so bad. And then the pandemic hit and the local economy slowed.

Now the annual allocation has been suspended for two recent years and it looks like it will be frozen for the foreseeable future. Yet the number and needs of San Francisco older neighbors and those with disabilities is still growing.

### Funding Not Keeping Pace - Impact on the Senior and Disability Community:

In San Francisco, older adults and adults living with a disability represent about 25% of the population. With 30% of this segment living alone, their health and well-being is further constrained due to poverty, declining health and the ever-increasing costs of living in the City.

#### Older Adults are the Fastest Growing Age Group



The senior and disabled community of San Francisco was hit hard by the pandemic, struggling through the recovery, and needing continued services and support to preserve physical and social health. That times are tough should not translate into leaving our most at risk neighbors behind, but rather call to do more to lend a helping hand. **With the many, more powerful entities vying for budget dollars, we ask that you "Forget Us Not."**

Since its establishment in 2017, the Dignity Fund has funded real progress to fill in historic gaps in funding to communities of color, LGBTQ individuals, people with disabilities and neighborhoods which have historically been left behind. The Dignity Fund provides pragmatic solutions, with strong oversight, in the form of programs and services to support older adults and adults with disabilities in living well in community.

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## How You Can Support:

The Dignity Fund Coalition and our community partners are once again needing to launching an effort to “keep the promise” made when votes supported the passage of the Dignity Fund by a very wide margin.

**Join us this year in our efforts** – we say “**Forget Us Not**” as the budget deliberations get under way with the City Departments, the Mayor’s Office and eventually with the Board of Supervisors. **The goal is to restore the promised Dignity Fund allocations this year and the years to come.**

Community members are making “forget me nots” and attached their story as individuals who are struggling to remain living in their homes and communities with the help that the Dignity Fund funding could provide. We need your help – email [flowerpower@sfccommunityliving.org](mailto:flowerpower@sfccommunityliving.org).



The first stop in the budget process is at the Disability and Aging Commission, which will discuss and recommend a budget to the Mayor’s Office. That meeting is **Wednesday, February 7 at 9:30 at City Hall Room**. We invite folks to join the meeting, flowers in hand, to asking the Commission members to join us in urging the Mayor and the members of the Board of Supervisor and other City Departments to restore the annual allocation. Just because it isn’t required by law doesn’t it is the fair and right action to take.

We are also scheduling meetings with members of the Board of Supervisors and hope to meet with the Mayor’s budget staff as well and well you to join in.

We want this to be a “grassroots” campaign, creating and growing forget-me-nots and telling our stories as the people who helped make San Francisco the inclusive, diverse, creative and compassionate city it remains. And who, at the neighborhood level, add help and hope to keep our neighborhoods aging and disability friendly.

Volunteer to help us with this campaign – email [info@sfdignityfund.org](mailto:info@sfdignityfund.org). You will find more about the [Dignity Fund here](#).

The Department of Disability and Aging (DAS) is responsible for the planning and decision-making for these funds, with oversight from the Dignity Fund Oversight Committee and the DAS Commission. Learn what they will be proposing at the [DAS Commission webpage](#).