

THE ADVOCATE

August 2010

SENIOR LEGISLATION SCORECARD INTRODUCED IN REGION 1-B

Older adults, adults with disabilities, family caregivers, and advocates now have a new tool to help them engage with their legislators. The 2009-2010 Senior Legislation Scorecard has been developed by Area Agency on Aging 1-B to report on voting records of its state legislators on select bills important to older adults. The Scorecard includes:

- A description of select bills of interest to seniors, which have been introduced in the current 2009-2010 legislative session
- The status of each bill – whether it has passed, failed, is currently being held in committee, or has had no action taken
- Actual votes of legislators who represent districts located in Region 1-B

The document arms advocates with specific information to foster a meaningful conversation with legislators. Legislators, as well, have the opportunity to comment on their votes. Most of the bills included in the Senior Legislation Scorecard have received overwhelming support from legislators. However, a number of important pieces of legislation remain in committee. **It is the work of the advocates to urge action on these bills.**

2009 - 2010 SENIOR SCORECARD House of Representatives		Aringer, Kathy	Barnett, Vicki	Brown, Lisa	Byrnes, Pam	Crawford, Hugh	Dunbar, Cindy	Dunagan, Marie	Ehill, Katie	Esposito, John	Gregory, Vincent	Hease, Jennifer	Hines, Gail	Haugh, Harold	Kirkland, Mary	Kovall, Eileen
Bill Number/Description	Score	100	100	100	100	92	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	92	92
Programs & Services for Seniors																
HB 4673 Prevents winter utility shut off to senior citizens		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
SB 744 Prohibits use of genetic information by Medicare supplement insurance policies		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
SB 528 Requires disclosure of re-use of single use medical devices		●	-	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
HB 5672 Requires deaf interpreter license fees be placed in fund for deaf and hearing services		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Elder Abuse Prevention																
HB 4618/4727 Increases penalties for financial exploitation of older adults		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
HB 4621 Allows court testimony by videotape		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
HB 5011 Allows third party to file abuse complaint on behalf of vulnerable adult		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
HB 5187 Allows financial institutions to report suspected cases of financial abuse		●	●	●	●	X	●	●	●	-	●	●	●	●	X	X
HB 5190 Creates senior medical alert act similar to "Amber Alert"		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
HB 5191 Requires nursing home employees to report cases of patient abuse to the state		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
HB 5195 Prohibits felon from receiving benefits from victim's estate		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Invest in Illness Prevention																
HB 4172 Requires hospitals to offer flu vaccine to inpatient seniors		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Government Reform																
HB 4118 Extends time to request property tax deferral		☆	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Key: ● Voted Yes, X Voted No, - Did Not Vote, ☆ Bill Sponsor

The Senior Scorecard is available in hard copy by contacting Ann Langford, Advocacy Specialist at (248) 262-1282, or email at alangford@aaa1b.com. An electronic copy may be viewed and downloaded at the Area Agency on Aging 1-B website, www.aaa1b.com. Click on the Advocacy tab.



The Area Agency on Aging 1-B (AAA 1-B) is a nonprofit agency serving the needs of older adults in Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, and Washtenaw counties. For more information about the Senior Advocacy Network (SAN) or to receive future editions of The Advocate, contact Ann Langford at (248) 262-1282 or by email at alangford@aaa1b.com.

Congress Passes FMAP Extension Good News for State Budget

The FY 2010-2011 state budget shortfall was eased a bit by the passage of the FMAP extension by Congress on August 10, 2010. FMAP, short for Federal Medical Assistance Percentages program, is a short-term infusion of federal monies intended to supplement states' Medicaid dollars during the economic recession.

The Governor, House, and Senate has included \$560 million in anticipated FMAP funds in the 2010-2011 budget, and state officials estimate that the passage of the extension will result in a \$300 million boost for the state. With a still significant loss of \$260 million, the Governor is preparing a plan to account for this shortfall in 2011, which may call for more revenues. Senate Majority Leader Mike Bishop, has prepared a list of additional funding cuts, but will reassess the need for further cuts when the Senate reconvenes this month.

Bill to Strengthen In-Home Care Quality for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Now in Senate

The Area Agency on Aging 1-B Board of Directors voted to support legislation which would provide additional support for individuals who receive daily care services in their own homes. The bill (HB 6195) makes permanent the Michigan Quality Community Care Council (MQC3) pilot program, which began in 2004 to address workforce issues of the Michigan Department of Human Services' (DHS) *Home Help* program. *Home Help* gives support to 60,000 adults on Medicaid who are unable to care for themselves adequately at home. Passage of HB 6195 would establish the MQC3 as a permanent public body with authority to:

- Create and maintain a registry of qualified and screened in-home care providers.
- Support consumers by helping them choose a provider and understand their role as employer.
- Support providers through training and peer mentoring.
- Negotiate wages and other benefits for *Home Help* providers, although wage setting will continue to be approved by the Legislature.
- Create a MQC3 Board of Directors, charged with submitting an annual report to the Governor and Legislature.
- Perform these functions for other public and privately funded programs, which might one day include access to the registry for personal assistants to support MI Choice consumers.

The bill passed the House in July, 2010, and has been referred to the Senate Senior Citizens and Veterans Affairs Committee. **Region 1-B Senators who serve on this committee are: John Pappageorge (877-736-1384), Valde Garcia (800-516-0026), and Dennis Olshove (517-373-8360).**

A detailed analysis of this bill can be found at the agency website, www.aaa1b.com. Click on the Advocacy tab, then Issues and Positions.