

State Budget Work Comes Down to the Wire AAA 1-B Advocates for Smaller Cut

Leaders in the Senate and House, and the governor, have recently signed off on the 2010-2011 budget agreement, and work now begins to meet the targeted spending figures. Passage of extended federal Medicaid match dollars for 2011 had precluded Governor Granholm and state lawmakers from calling for even deeper cuts to the state budget, however, a \$484 million deficit remains. The Department of Community Health (DCH), from which funding for Office of Services to the Aging (OSA) originates, is targeted to receive a 3% administrative reduction, plus an additional \$50 million cut. This equates to 5.5% less than the DCH received last year.

AAA 1-B supports a 4% OSA cut, which splits the difference between what was approved by the House (no cut) and Senate (8% cut)

CALL-TO-ACTION: Preserve Funding for Aging Services

Legislators on the joint Department of Community Health (DCH) Appropriations Conference Committee will now make the difficult decisions on how the DCH monies will be meted out within the department, and which programs will be impacted. Last year at this time, funding for the Office of Services to the Aging (OSA) was slated for an 8% cut. However, as the details of that budget were finalized in the conference subcommittee, OSA's funding was cut an *additional 7%*. Aging advocates were surprised and disappointed. This year, it's imperative to take action now so that the needs of older Michigan residents do not get ignored. The AAA 1-B staff are meeting with committee members to advocate these points, but your help is needed as well.

Please contact these conference committee members

Senator John Pappageorge

(877) 736-1384

senjpappageorge@senate.michigan.gov

Senator Deb Cherry

(866) 305-2126

sendcherry@senate.mi.gov

MI CHOICE Funding Likely to Increase

Funding for the MI Choice Home and Community Based Waiver program has been included in the 2011 state budget agreement recently released by the Senate, House, and Governor Granholm. MI Choice is a Medicaid program that allows consumers to receive a variety of services in their own homes, if they wish, rather than having to move to more expensive nursing homes. Since MI Choice and Medicaid both receive funding through the state, the “increase” is actually a shift, as the funds would be used to transition more people out of nursing homes. Lawmakers recognize the savings to the state by funding MI Choice; the Governor and House proposed a \$14 million increase, and the Senate, a \$20 million increase.

According to the Area Agencies on Aging Association of Michigan, Michigan is a national leader in nursing home transitions with Area Agencies on Aging, Waiver Agents and Centers for Independent Living expected to transition over 1200 people this year. In Region 1-B, the Nursing Facilities Transition program has helped move over 350 persons since 2005.

Urge Passage of Elder Abuse Bills Before Year-End

The Michigan Department of Human Services estimates that **over 73,000 older adults are abused** in Michigan each year. The Senate Judiciary Committee has been presented a number of bills, all passed in the House, which will provide much needed protection for Michigan’s older adults. If these bills are not passed by year-end, they will expire. The Area Agency on Aging 1-B has sent a letter to its state legislators urging passage of these bills, and advocates are asked to make their voices heard as well.

Please contact your legislators and ask them to urge Senators Wayne Kuipers and Gretchen Whitmer, leaders of the Senate Judiciary Committee, to vote on these bills:

HB 4618 - Increases penalties for financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult through fraud, deceit, coercion, misrepresentation, and unjust enrichment. **HB 4727** - Establishes sentencing guidelines for the increased penalties proposed by HB 4618.

HB 4621 - Allows vulnerable adults to submit testimony in court to a jury via closed circuit television, video recording, or other similar means.

HB 4620/4626 (tie-barred) - Amends the Michigan Penal Code to rewrite the provision regarding fraudulently obtaining a signature with the intent to cheat or defraud.

HB 5011 - Allows a third party to file a criminal adult abuse complaint on behalf of a vulnerable adult.

HB 5195 - Prohibits a person who killed, abused, neglected, or exploited an individual from receiving benefits from a victim’s estate.

To find the name and phone number of your legislators, call (517) 373-2400 for Senators, and (517) 373-0135 for Representatives. You will be transferred to their offices.

If you wish to contact the Judiciary Committee chairs personally, you can reach Senator Wayne Kuipers (Dist. 30, Holland) at (877) 585-7377 or email: senwkuipers@senate.michigan.gov and Senator Gretchen Whitmer (Dist. 23, East Lansing) at (517) 373-1734 or email: senqwhitmer@senate.michigan.gov.

Detailed information on the bills can be found at www.michiganvotes.org.

“Complete Streets” For All Ages and Abilities



On August 1, 2010, Governor Jennifer Granholm signed the “Complete Streets” legislation (PA 134 and 135) which ensures that citizens of all ages and abilities be considered when transportation authorities plan and develop road projects. “Complete Streets” policies, gaining traction throughout the country, promote safe and efficient movement of people and goods whether by motorized vehicle, assistive device, foot or bicycle.

DON'T MISS THE 11TH ANNUAL
Solutions for
 Family Caregiver Expo

Saturday, October 16, 2010
 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION
 Best Western Sterling Inn
 Banquet & Conference Center
 34911 Van Dyke (at 15 Mile Road) • Sterling Heights

FREE Parking! FREE Admission!

For More Information

michigancaregiverexpo.com
 aaa1b.com
 (800) 852-7795
 e-mail: sjustice@aaa1b.com

LOCAL NEWS FOR ADVOCATES

St. Clair Senior Millage Renewed

With an overwhelming 80% vote in favor, the senior citizen millage was renewed in St. Clair County in the August election. Despite tough economic conditions, voters understood the value of supporting programs for the county’s older adults, such as home delivered meals, transportation, personal home care, and home repairs. Millage monies help county aging services organizations provide these vital services and enable them to qualify for state and federal matching grants. The four year, 0.5 mill tax will raise approximately \$2.9 million in 2011.

Transit Master Plan in Washtenaw

Washtenaw County transportation provider, *TheRide*, has begun the process to develop a Transit Master Plan to ensure that the county remains an attractive place to live and work safely and independently. A series of public meetings are being conducted to gather input on how transportation can support citizens of every age. Advocates in Washtenaw County are encouraged to attend. For additional information, contact *TheRide* at (734) 794-1880 or click on MovingYouForward.org or TransitMasterPlan@TheRide.org.

Advocates Invited to Talk with Legislators

The November election promises to shake up Lansing as at least 63 state senator and representative seats will be filled by new members. Advocates will face a challenge as they work to communicate the needs and concerns of older adults and adults with disabilities to new lawmakers.

However, a number of legislators in Region 1-B are running for re-election. Please consider attending one of these coffee hours and urge lawmakers to make older adults and adults with disabilities a priority. The following legislators have sent their upcoming schedules to the AAA 1-B to share with advocates. If your representatives are not listed, contact their offices directly. Senators may be reached at (517) 373-2400 and Representatives at (517) 373-0135.

Legislator (district)	Upcoming Local Meetings
Sen. John Pappageorge (13)	Every last Saturday, 9 – 11 am, Troy Community Center, 3179 Livernois, Troy; Noon -2 pm, Baldwin Public Library, 300 W. Merrill Street, Birmingham; 3 – 5 pm, Royal Oak Public Library, 222 E. 14 Mile Road, Royal Oak
Rep. Sarah Roberts (24)	Every 2 nd Monday, 8 - 9 am, Steve's Backroom, 24317 Jefferson, St. Clair Shores. Every last Friday, 8 - 9 am, Big Apple Bagel, 26250 Crocker, Harrison Twp.
Rep. Jon Switalski (25)	Monday, Sep. 27, 6:30 pm, call (877) JONS-025 for location
Rep. Ellen Cogen Lipton (27)	Monday, Sep. 27, 11 am, AJ's Café, 240 W. Nine Mile, Ferndale
Rep. Vicki Barnett (37)	Monday, Sep. 13, 7:30—9:30 am, Panera, 34635 Grand River, Farmington
Rep. Chuck Moss (40)	Every 4 th Friday, 9 - 11 am, Leo's Coney Island, 6535 Telegraph Road, Bloomfield Township
Rep. Marty Knollenberg (41)	Monday, Sep. 20, 8 - 9 am, Starbucks, corner of Big Beaver and Crooks, Troy
Rep. Gail Haines (43)	Friday, Sep. 10, 9 - 10:30 am, West Bloomfield Library, 4600 Walnut Lake Road
Rep. Eileen Kowall (44)	Every 1 st Monday, (Sep 13—this month) 8 - 9 am, Leo's Coney Island, 6845 Highland Road, White Lake. Every 1 st Monday, (Sep 13—this month) Noon - 1pm, Pete's Coney II, 6160 Dixie Highway, Clarkston
Rep. Tom McMillin (45)	Monday, Sep 27, 4 - 6 pm, Rochester Hills City Hall, 1000 Rochester Hills Drive. Town Hall on Oct. 2 from 10 - 11, at the Older Persons Commission to discuss 2011 budget.. Older Persons' Activity Center, 650 Letica Dr., Rochester

Candidate Forums

Washtenaw County League of Women Voters of the Ann Arbor Area, Candidate Forum

Monday, September 27, and Wednesday, September 29, Details and times to be announced. Forums will be held at Community Television Network, 2805 S. Industrial Hwy., Suite 200, Ann Arbor. Call for details (734) 665-5808 or check their website: <http://lwvann Arbor.org/calendar.html>.

Oakland County League of Women Voters—Oakland Area, Candidate Forum

Candidates for State Representative, District 45 and State Senate, District 12. Wednesday, October 6 at 7 p.m. Rochester Hills City Hall, 1000 Rochester Hills Drive.

Candidates for US House of Representatives, District 9. Sunday, October 10, at 3 pm. Oakland University Banquet Room at the Oakland Center, 2000 N. Squirrel Road, Auburn Hills. Call for details at (248) 594-6602 or check their website: http://www.lwvoa.org/candidate_forums.html.