



## Older Americans Act Reauthorization Bill Introduced in Congress

The Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging has introduced a bill (S. 2037) to reauthorize the Older Americans Act (OAA). Throughout 2011, aging advocates and officials from Administration on Aging presented the subcommittee their recommendations for modernizing the OAA. Senator Bernard Sander's (I-VT) bill represents the beginning of the process, and the final legislation will likely include provisions from multiple bills. Key provisions include:

- A 50% increase in the authorization of funding for four core areas: nutrition, supportive services, health promotion/disease prevention and the SCSEP (senior employment) program. This is not to be confused with appropriations, which are determined by Congress annually.
- Congregate and home-delivered (HD) meal program dollars will be allocated 40% to congregate, 35% to HD, and 25% to either type.
- States will have the option to give all preventive services funding to AAAs, or to programs with demonstrated and evidence based prevention models, or to provide prevention services directly.
- Cost sharing for nutrition programs will not be allowed, but voluntary contributions will be encouraged by individuals whose income is 200% above poverty guidelines.
- Some National Caregiver Support Program dollars can be used to support family and resident councils in nursing homes.
- The objective "An adequate income in retirement" will be replaced with "Economic security in later life."  
The term economic security is defined as having the income necessary to pay for housing, health care, transportation, food, long-term care, and goods and services to meet other basic needs.
- Redefine individuals in "greatest economic need" as those with incomes at 200% of federal poverty level, versus the current 185%.
- Redefine "greatest social need" to include persons with Alzheimer's Disease; and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and HIV positive older individuals.

## Governor Snyder Calls on House to Pass Elder Abuse Bills

In January's State of the State address, Governor Rick Snyder called upon elected leaders to take care of unfinished business from 2011. Passage of the elder abuse bills is one of those unfinished tasks. These bills will make it easier to report and prosecute abuse and financial exploitation. The Senate carefully examined the 18-bill package and passed it with nearly 100% support. Now it's the House's turn.

**On February 21, the House Families, Children, and Seniors committee will hear testimony on all but four of the bills. If you would like to attend, testify, or submit written testimony, please contact Ann Langford at (248) 262-1282 or by e-mail at [alangford@aaa1b.com](mailto:alangford@aaa1b.com). We need advocates to speak out and stand up for Michigan's vulnerable adults!**

Descriptions of each bill can be found on the AAA 1-B website under Advocacy Issues & Positions, or [click here](#). For paper copy of bill descriptions, contact Ann at (248) 262-1282.

## Communities May Lose Funding for Senior Services As State Considers Eliminating Local Tax

The AAA 1-B is following an emerging issue out of Lansing, a proposal (SB 883) that could cut more than \$7 million in funding for older adult services throughout Michigan. Governor Snyder seeks to amend the General Property Tax Act by eliminating the Personal Property Tax (PPT). Personal property that is subject to the PPT applies to businesses, not individuals, and includes moveable assets that businesses have in their buildings or on their land, such as commercial and agricultural equipment, industrial machinery, gas and electric transmission equipment, and oil pipelines. Currently, PPT revenue is distributed to counties, school districts, libraries, and other public service organizations to support police, firefighters, school systems, libraries, transportation services, *and senior services*.



The AAA 1-B is concerned because enactment of the bill would also cut the amount of money raised by senior millages for senior centers and other services that assist older adults. It is estimated that St. Clair County would lose \$275,000 annually and Monroe County's senior millage would be reduced by over \$300,000 each year.

Proponents of the bill contend it will further enhance the competitive position of Michigan, leading to business activity and expansion. The Michigan Manufacturers Association has indicated that the enactment of SB 883 is critical for manufacturing companies due to the recent increase in their tax liability under the corporate income tax. Opponents of the bill say it does not guarantee replacement revenue. The Michigan Association of Counties, Michigan Municipal League and the Michigan Township Association have voiced opposition, noting that the potential loss of \$1.2 billion would have a devastating impact on local government. A decision on this legislation is not expected in the near future due to its magnitude and complexity. The AAA 1-B is closely following the issue and will provide a comprehensive analysis of the bill.

### Michigan Budget in the Black for FY 2013

The state's Revenue Estimating Conference in January reported a \$457 million budget surplus for FY 2013. Governor Snyder will release his budget proposal in mid-February but is expected to recommend that some of the surplus be set aside for long-term obligations such as state retiree pensions. Of course, advocates for programs that saw severe budget cuts in 2012 and years prior, including human services, education, and local governments for example, will try to have some of the surplus added back to those programs.



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