

## Region 1-B Prepares for State Funding Cuts

The Area Agency on Aging 1-B (AAA 1-B) anticipates the continued reduction of state funds through the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging (OSA) in FY 2011, and has developed a strategy to mitigate the impact of funding cuts on the most vital programs and services to older adults in its service area.

The AAA 1-B's proposed Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) for FY 2011 is based on an anticipated 8% state funding cut. AAA 1-B management employed a variety of methods to develop a reasonable budget, including surveying stakeholders, prioritizing services, and planning scenarios for a variety of budget circumstances. An 8% cut represents a loss of nearly \$400,000 for AAA 1-B funded programs. With the approval of the Board of Directors, AAA 1-B proposes that lower priority services receive larger funding cuts, be integrated into other services, and/or be eliminated from the current funding cycle.

If cuts to state aging funds are less than anticipated, and/or other federal or private resources are identified to fill the anticipated gaps in state funding, this same data will provide a framework for reinstating programs and services. The AAA 1-B is committed to developing and supporting local level coalitions to continue to provide services which have been reduced or eliminated, including Grandparents Raising Grandchildren initiatives and Elder Abuse Prevention (EAP) coalition.

By all sources surveyed, home delivered meals were designated a high priority service, and regardless of the level of cuts determined by the state legislature, AAA 1-B would seek to preserve this funding by requesting from OSA a waiver to transfer federal Older Americans Act Title III-B congregate meals monies to home delivered meals. As a result, up to 100,000 home delivered meals throughout Region 1-B would be saved. However, some congregate meal sites may serve meals on fewer days, some low activity sites may close, corporate sponsors may be asked to support sites, and/or some sites may convert to other models of operation (i.e. private pay).

The provision of social services in AAA 1-B would face significant changes. Based on the data used to prioritize AAA 1-B services, the following changes would be made:

- Contracts for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (GRG) would cease, and Prevention of Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation (PEANE) contracts would be greatly reduced and would focus on building local EAP coalitions in each of the Region 1-B counties. The AAA 1-B would continue to provide information to consumers through the Resource Center for individuals in need of GRG and PEANE resources, as well as through local partners such as Resource Advocates.

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

- Social Services receiving an 8% funding cut are Public Education, Vision Impaired Services, and Hearing Impaired Services. Funding for Legal Assistance Services would be reduced, but maintained at 6.5% of Title III-B funding, as required by OSA guidelines.
- Contracts for Home Injury Control would be reduced by 50%.

In addition, the AAA 1-B will absorb approximately 22% of the cuts internally, by reducing program and administrative spending. For example, cuts in funding for Care Management services will be implemented through the reorganization of the Community Support Services Department to maximize the use of existing resources.

The FY 2011 Annual Implementation Plan, which includes complete details of these budget proposals, is available on the AAA 1-B website, [www.aaa1b.com](http://www.aaa1b.com), and will be presented at a public hearing on May 25, 2010, at 1:00 p.m., at the AAA 1-B offices in Southfield. Your participation in this planning process is encouraged, and you are invited to comment on the Plan at the hearing, or by mail, fax, or email. If you wish to participate in the hearing via conference call, the conference call number is (641) 715-3840, access code 1049280#.

Send your comments to:

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## **Senator Debbie Stabenow Provides Leadership Support for OAA Funding**

Michigan Senator Debbie Stabenow, together with Senator Blanche Lincoln of Arkansas, circulated a letter to their colleagues requesting signatures in support of a request to Appropriations Subcommittee leaders to increase across-the-board Older Americans Act (OAA) funding by at least twelve percent in FY 2011. The Area Agency on Aging 1-B congratulates Senator Stabenow for her leadership and commitment to older adults in Michigan, and also thanks Senator Carl Levin for his sign-on to the Stabenow-Lincoln letter. Only seventeen U.S. Senators added their signatures.

In the House of Representatives, similar attention was given to OAA funding, and congratulations go to Michigan Representatives Gary Peters (Bloomfield Township), Dale Kildee (Flint), and Mark Schauer (Battle Creek) who supported older adults by adding their signatures to Representatives Ron Klein and Bill Delahunt's letter sent to the House Appropriations Subcommittee. Unfortunately only forty-nine Representatives signed on to this letter. An increase of at least twelve percent is critical to offset years of stagnant funding and to address increased demand relating to population growth and inflation. In Region 1-B, it will substantially increase the number of meals delivered to home-bound adults and reducing the wait list time for receiving in-home services. There are nearly 1,500 individuals on this wait list.



# Capitol Rally

Thursday, June 10, 2010

10:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

On the Lawn of the State Capitol

Listen to presentations by legislators and advocates

Receive the new Senior Scorecard

Meet with your legislators and urge them  
to support the platform

## 2010 Platform for Legislative Action

- Fund senior and long term care services
- Pass legislation to prevent elder abuse
- Invest in prevention programs that keep seniors healthy
- Make Michigan a great place to retire
- Reform government to close loopholes and restructure taxes to raise state revenues

Read the complete platform at  
[oldermichigiansday.com](http://oldermichigiansday.com)

For more information and free tickets to the Capitol Rally, contact Ann Langford at (248) 262-1282 or by email at [alangford@aaa1b.com](mailto:alangford@aaa1b.com).

## AAA 1-B Older Michiganians Day Local Events

### Monroe County

Friday, May 21, 1:00 p.m.  
Bedford Senior Center  
1653 Samaria Road  
Temperance, MI 48182

### St. Clair County

Friday, June 4, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.  
Council on Aging, Inc.  
Port Huron Senior Center  
600 Grand River Ave.  
Port Huron, MI 48060

### Macomb County

Senior Fun Festival  
Visit the Older Michiganians Day area  
Wednesday, June 16,  
10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Gibraltar Trade Center  
237 N. River Road  
Mt. Clemens, MI 48043

### Livingston County

Senior Power Day  
Visit the Older Michiganians Day area  
Thur., August 5, 5:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.  
Fri., August 6, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
Brighton High School  
7878 Brighton Road  
Brighton, MI 48116

Oakland and Washtenaw County  
events to be determined

## Corporate Sponsors of 2010 Older Michiganians Day



Presbyterian  
Villages  
OF MICHIGAN  
SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITIES



## Senior Advocates Share Ideas to Thwart Media Bias

Senior Advocates from Region 1-B met recently with the Andy Farmer, Associate State Director of AARP Michigan, to discuss how issues critical to older adults, i.e., health care and taxation, are often presented with a bias which shapes preferences and beliefs. Farmer urged advocates to “drill deeper” when evaluating a policy proposal or a comment by a politician, news outlet, or blog. Look for reference sources and footnotes. Find out about the author’s organization, its leaders, sources of funding, and other involvements.



Advocate Emily Dye agreed, “I have to evaluate things based on a broader base of knowledge.” Farmer used a series of lightning-rod assertions relating to health care reform to show how messages are framed to persuade a position. As an example, some opponents of the health care reform law recently signed by President Obama contend that it includes \$500 billion in cuts to Medicare. That statement, according to Farmer, is misleading. “The \$500 billion figure represents not a cut, but a reduction of the expected increase in Medicare costs.” Advocates

agreed that it is the responsibility of all citizens to form opinions on an issue through careful analysis and a healthy dose of skepticism.

Kim Walsh, of Detroit Radio Information Service, suggested that advocates take a stand on misinformation. “If you find something online you can debunk, I urge you to contact the source or make a comment.” Credible sources cited by advocates include the Commonwealth Fund, Kaiser Foundation, politifact.com, and League of Women Voters. Area Agency on Aging 1-B does not endorse any particular source of information, but urges advocates to consult a variety of sources to form a reasoned opinion on an issue or policy.

In the fall, Area Agency on Aging 1-B will hold a Senior Advocacy Network forum to discuss the 2011 Reauthorization of the federal Older Americans Act. Look for information about this upcoming forum in future editions of *The Advocate*.

## Health Care Reform: Provisions for Older Adults

Upon passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and its companion, the Health Care and Education Act, together commonly known as Health Care Reform, phone calls to the Information and Assistance line at Region 1-B have increased significantly. Older adults, adults with disabilities, their caregivers, and service providers want to know how this new law will impact them, both immediately and over the long run.

- A compilation of the law’s provisions has been prepared by Consumers Union, which may be accessed at the website, [www.consumersunion.org/health](http://www.consumersunion.org/health).
- The nonpartisan National Council on Aging has produced the report, *Straight Talk for Seniors on Health Reform*, which can be found on their website, [www.ncoa.org](http://www.ncoa.org).
- For a detailed timeline of reform implementation, go to the Kaiser Foundation website, [www.kff.org](http://www.kff.org).

For advocates who do not have access to the internet, contact Ann Langford at (248) 262-1282 to receive paper copies of these reports.