



**AREA AGENCIES ON AGING ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN
ADVOCACY ALERT
February 24, 2010**

STOP MORE CUTS IN AGING SERVICES FOR 2011

BACKGROUND:

Vulnerable seniors have been victims of the state's budget crisis. Within the past year, programs funded by the Office of Services to the Aging (OSA) have been cut by \$7 million – an 18% loss. The Governor's budget recommendations for FY 2011 include more cuts in OSA services. Totalling \$2.3 million, the cuts would reduce in-home services, home-delivered meals, care management, volunteer programs, caregiver supports and other programs that help keep seniors living independently. Without these services, caregivers get burned out and nursing home placement is frequently the result, with seniors spending down their assets and going on Medicaid to pay the \$68,000 annual bill. If these cuts go into effect, more than 2,000 older adults would be affected.

While the Governor makes a recommendation, the Legislature makes budget decisions. Your advocacy is needed to convince Legislators that more OSA cuts are 'penny wise and pound foolish.' Home and community-based care has proven cost-effective and can save Medicaid money by preventing unnecessary nursing home placement. Last year, \$4 million in OSA services for the most at-risk clients saved Medicaid \$140 million.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Contact the members of the Senate subcommittee that will make a recommendation to the full Senate about funding for the OSA budget. Members are listed below.

Members of the Community Health Appropriations Subcommittee:

Chair: Senator Roger Kahn, M.D.	(866) 305-2132	senrkahn@senate.michigan.gov
Senator John Pappageorge	(877) 736-1384	senjpappageorge@senate.michigan.gov
Senator Tom George, M.D.	(866) 305-2120	sentgeorge@senate.michigan.gov
Senator Tony Stamas	(866) 305-2136	ofctstamas@senate.michigan.gov
Senator Deb Cherry	(866) 305-2126	sendcherry@senate.mi.gov
Senator Jim Barcia	(866) 305-2131	senjbarcia@senate.michigan.gov
Senator Mickey Switalski	(866) 303-0110	senmswitalski@senate.michigan.gov

Here are some talking points:

- OSA services help vulnerable seniors stay in their own homes. They prevent seniors from going into nursing homes, spending down their assets, and then going on Medicaid.
- OSA services help seniors who are needy, some of whom are on waiting lists for the MI Choice waiver.
- Last year, \$4 million in OSA services saved Medicaid \$140 million.