



**AREA AGENCIES ON AGING ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN
ADVOCACY ALERT
March 21, 2013**

YOUR ADVOCACY NEEDED ON THE STATE BUDGET

BACKGROUND:

In February, Governor Rick Snyder introduced his Executive Budget recommendations for fiscal year 2014. AAAAM applauds the Governor for recommending an \$18 million increase in the MI Choice Medicaid Waiver, for total funding of \$300 million. The increase is needed to serve individuals on the waiting list and those in nursing homes wanting to return to the community.

The Governor recommends flat funding for services funded by the Office of Services to the Aging (OSA). AAAAM is asking Legislators for an \$8.9 million increase for OSA to restore cuts made during the 2009-2011 recession. The \$8.9 million includes meals-on-wheels (\$3.3 million), community services (\$2.9 million) and volunteer programs (\$2 million). These services are preventing seniors from going in institutions and costing the state more in Medicaid spending.

The cuts have affected thousands of frail elders by reducing the number of meals received, cutting hours of assistance and putting people on waiting lists. There are almost 4,000 on waiting lists. Simple, low-cost services like meals, a weekly bath, and a lifeline call button can prevent the need for high cost medical and hospital services, and prevent costly institutionalization.

Legislators are now considering fiscal year 2014 funding. **Now is the time to support the Governor's \$18 million increase for MI Choice, and advocate for restoration of OSA cuts.**

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Send messages to your Representatives and Senators asking for their support to help seniors stay at home and receive services in the setting they prefer.

Here are talking points you can use:

- MI Choice is a cost effective alternative to nursing homes, at one-third the cost.
- There are over 5,000 people on waiting lists for MI Choice.
- OSA services prevent seniors from going on Medicaid and are extremely cost-effective. The average annual cost of OSA services (meals-on-wheels and home care) is about \$1000. In contrast, a nursing home costs over \$70,000.
- There are 4,000 seniors on waiting lists for OSA services like meals and home care.