

STATE WIDE

New York StateWide Senior Action Council, Inc.
275 State Street, Albany, NY 12210 • (518) 436-1006 • Fax (518) 436-7642
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STATE BUDGET ISSUES IMPACTING OLDER NEW YORKER AND THEIR FAMILIES State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2014-2015 - April 1, 2014 – March 31, 2015 *As proposed by Governor Cuomo (as of January 31, 2014)*

BUDGET PROPOSALS

A. STATEWIDE'S PROGRAMS:

Patients Rights Helpline: Increase StateWide's Patient Rights Helpline funding to a total of \$100,000 annually.

Managed Care Community Assistance Program (MCCAP): Ensure StateWide's counseling services continue to be funded by the state and prevent any gap in services when the current contract expires by using the SFY2013-14 budget language in the Office for Aging budget (SFY2014-15 Aid to Localities - Assembly Bill 8553, Senate Bill 6353) by specifically including the names of the 7 MCCAP providers.

B. The NYS Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) - Increase appropriations to reduce waiting lists in vital services such as EISEP, CSE and Wellness and Nutrition programs where the value invested is significantly less than the cost of a nursing home stay.

C. The NYS Department of Health & Medicaid

Spousal Impoverishment – Oppose repeal of the right for spousal/parental refusal.

Drug coverage – Oppose elimination of the provider prevails standard.

New Public Insurance Program - Support the creation of the BASIC Health Program as a new public insurance option.

Health Insurance Consumer rights to expand:

Surprise out-of-network billing - Support new health insurance consumer protections to eliminate surprise medical billing.

Medicaid Managed Care Ombudsman - Support funding for the Medicaid Managed Care Ombudsman and re-appropriate SFY2013-14 funding that has not been allocated due to delay in releasing the grant application.

Health Facility Funding - Oppose private investment in hospitals.

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Health Planning - Support establishment of regional health planning and mandate that community-based organizations that are not medical providers, such as aging and disability services providers are appointed to ensure discussions of a full range of services.

D. Financial Assistance

HEAP – Restore funding to HEAP to SFY2013-14 appropriations, improve program administration to reduce barriers to distribution of funds, and ensure that a dedicated portion of funding is earmarked for senior services.

SSI – Enact the pass-thru of the federal COLA and increase the state supplement by 20% to address income inequality.

Housing – Support efforts to provide affordable and safe housing for older New Yorkers.

E. Disaster Preparedness - Include in disaster preparedness efforts the development of a registry of seniors and persons with disabilities who may need assistance in an emergency; an improved infrastructure that supports provision of electricity, food, heat, water and communications; safe and effective evacuation planning; sufficient safe and accessible shelters, ability to get emergency prescription refills and replacement durable medical equipment; and sufficient numbers of rescue and health personnel to meet emergency needs.

F. Tax Relief and Property Tax Changes

Personal Income Tax - Support tax simplification efforts while ensuring that seniors are aware when there may be benefit eligibility that requires the filing of taxes.

STAR relief - Oppose elimination of the cost of living adjustment to the upper income limit qualifications.

Temporary Utility Assessment - Eliminate the surcharge on residential customers who are seniors and persons with disabilities who live on fixed incomes as a priority over expediting the elimination of the tax on industrial utility customers.

Estate tax relief – Oppose eliminating the tax on estates over \$1 million.

Real property tax credit – Oppose the real property tax credit for household incomes over \$250,000 and its requirement that only residents of jurisdictions that adhere to the property tax