



**AREA AGENCIES ON AGING ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN
ADVOCACY ALERT
August 4, 2009**

ADVOCATE WITH CONGRESS FOR PROJECT 2020

BACKGROUND:

Project 2020 builds on the Older Americans Act by providing resources to states to implement consumer-centered and cost-effective long-term care strategies. The strategies have been tested on a national basis and are now ready for full implementation. The three strategies are empowering consumers to make informed decisions, helping older adults adopt healthy behaviors, and diverting older adults away from nursing homes.

Project 2020 would reduce unnecessary hospitalizations and nursing home placements, and free up resources in the Medicare and Medicaid programs that can be channeled through the aging network. According to the Lewin Group, 2020 would reduce federal spending on Medicare and Medicaid by \$2.8 billion over the first five years, and after accounting for expenditures, result in a net savings of almost \$250 million. For more details on Project 2020, visit www.n4a.org

WHERE IT STANDS NOW:

After months of advocacy, we are now at a critical juncture. Project 2020 has been introduced as S. 1257 by Senators Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), and H.R. 2852 by Representatives Bruce Braley (D-IA) and John Sarbanes (D-MD). Our next steps are to recruit members of Congress to sign on as co-sponsors of S. 1257/H.R. 2852 and to push for inclusion of the bills in the House and Senate health reform packages. These ambitious goals require your assistance!

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1. Send a brief message by email or fax to your U.S. Representative asking him/her to co-sponsor H.R. 2852 and push for inclusion in health reform legislation -- see the list at the end of this alert. To identify your Representative, go to www.house.gov. (If your Representative is Mark Schauer (D-Battle Creek), send a thank you note because he has already signed on as a cosponsor.)
2. Send a similar message to U.S. Senator Carl Levin about cosponsoring S. 1257. Emails can be sent through his website at www.levin.senate.gov and faxes can be sent to (202) 224-1388. Send thank yous to Senator Debbie Stabenow through www.stabenow.senate.gov or by fax - (202) 228-0325.
3. Follow up your messages with a phone call. Ask for the staff person who handles aging or health care issues and voice your support for Project 2020. Ask the staffer to convey your request for support directly to the legislator, and let you know the result.

4. Share this advocacy alert with other individuals and groups interested in long term care. The more buzz there is about Project 2020, the better our chances of success!

Here are some talking points you can use in your messages:

- Countless studies of older adults indicate they want to live in their own homes as long as possible. Investing in home and community-based care is far more cost-effective than paying Medicare hospital bills and Medicaid nursing home bills. On average, home and community-based care costs one-quarter of institutional care.
- Federal funding for the Older Americans Act has not kept pace with inflation or the growth in the older population. As a result, many older Americans are not getting the services they need to stay healthy and independent, resulting in unnecessary hospitalizations and nursing home placements.
- Baby Boomers are a demographic tidal wave, and will place significant financial demands on Medicare and Medicaid if changes aren't made in the way we provide care.
- Project 2020 will reduce federal spending on Medicare and Medicaid by \$2.8 billion over the first five years, resulting in a net savings of almost \$250 million. Aging network interventions can reduce hospitalizations and nursing home placements.

LIST OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVES FROM MICHIGAN (area code is 202)

<u>Name</u>	<u>email</u>	<u>phone</u>	<u>fax</u>
Dave Camp-Midland	www.house.gov/camp	225-3561	225-9679
John Conyers-Detroit	John.Conyers@mail.house.gov	225-5126	225-0072
John Dingell-Dearborn	Public.Dingell@mail.house.gov	225-4071	226-0371
Vern Ehlers-Grand Rapids	www.house.gov/writerep	225-3831	225-5144
Pete Hoekstra-Holland	http://hoekstra.house.gov	225-4401	226-0779
Dale Kildee-Flint	DKildee@mail.house.gov	225-3611	225-6393
Carolyn Kilpatrick-Detroit	http://www.house.gov/kilpatrick	225-2261	225-5730
Sander Levin-Southfield	slevin@mail.house.gov	225-4961	226-1033
Thaddeus McCotter-Livonia	Thaddeus.McCotter@mail.house.gov	225-8171	225-2667
Candice Miller-Harrison Twnshp	www.candicemiller.house.gov	225-2106	226-1169
Gary Peters-Bloomfield Twnshp	www.peters.house.gov	225-5802	226-2356
Mike Rogers-Brighton	www.mikerogers.house.gov	225-4872	225-5820
Mark Schauer-Battle Creek	www.schauer.house.gov	225-6276	225-6281