



**AREA AGENCIES ON AGING ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN**  
**ADVOCACY ALERT**  
**August 12, 2010**

**STOP MORE CUTS IN OSA 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. The Senate has approved its version of the budget and it included the \$2.3 million in OSA cuts. The House of Representatives is recommending no additional OSA cuts for 2011.

Your advocacy is needed to convince a joint House-Senate Conference Committee 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. Even a small amount of in-home services can prevent institutional placement. Last year, if the aging network's 2,400 most at-risk clients had not gotten help and were forced into nursing homes, Medicaid would have spent \$140 million more on nursing home care. In contrast, those clients were served by the aging network at a cost of \$4 million.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:**

Contact these members of the Conference Committee and ask them to oppose any cuts in services for seniors funded by the Office of Services to the Aging for next year.

Senator Roger Kahn, M.D.	(866) 305-2132	<a href="mailto:senrkahn@senate.michigan.gov">senrkahn@senate.michigan.gov</a>
Senator John Pappageorge	(877) 736-1384	<a href="mailto:senjpappageorge@senate.michigan.gov">senjpappageorge@senate.michigan.gov</a>
Senator Deb Cherry	(866) 305-2126	<a href="mailto:sendcherry@senate.mi.gov">sendcherry@senate.mi.gov</a>
Rep. Gary McDowell	(888) 737-4279	<a href="mailto:garymcdowell@house.mi.gov">garymcdowell@house.mi.gov</a>
Rep. George Cushingberry	(888) 347-8008	<a href="mailto:georgecushingberry@house.mi.gov">georgecushingberry@house.mi.gov</a>
Rep. Kevin Green	(866) 538-4677	<a href="mailto:kevingreen@house.mi.gov">kevingreen@house.mi.gov</a>

Here are some talking points:

- OSA services prevent seniors from going into nursing homes, spending down their assets, and then going on Medicaid.
- Last year, \$4 million in OSA services saved Medicaid \$140 million
- There are 4,400 on waiting lists for OSA services like meals and home care.