



**AREA AGENCIES ON AGING ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN  
ADVOCACY ALERT  
November 9, 2011**

**ACTION NEEDED ON ELDER ABUSE BILLS**

**BACKGROUND:**

Five years ago, a Governor-appointed Task Force of aging experts released a set of recommendations on addressing the growing, and mostly hidden, problem of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. Since then, many bills have been introduced, but have died due to inaction by one or both houses. Similar bills have been introduced in 2011. We want legislators to get the job done this year to prevent abuse and get justice for victims.

The Senate passed a package of 18 bills in early November. Here are a few examples:

- [Senate Bill 461](#) would prevent an abuser from inheriting his/her victim's assets.
- [Senate Bill 454](#) would allow vulnerable adults to provide videotaped testimony similar to laws protecting children from having to face their abusers.
- [Senate Bill 466](#) would require law enforcement to publicize a missing elder similar to the Amber Alerts used for missing children

Fourteen (14) of these bills are now in the House Families, Children and Seniors Committee, chaired by Rep. Ken Kurtz, and the other four bills are in the House Banking and Financial Services Committee, chaired by Rep. Marty Knollenberg. The bills have to be reported out of these committees, and then be approved by the entire House before they can go to Governor Snyder for his signature. Advocates are pushing for the bills to become law by Christmas as a present for older Michigianians.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:**

Contact the Chairmen of these two committees along with the Speaker of the House and ask that the bills be reported out of these committees as soon as possible! Also contact your own Representative and ask him/her to advocate with Kurtz, Knollenberg and Bolger.

Representative Ken Kurtz	(866) 362-8812	<a href="mailto:kennethkurtz@house.mi.gov">kennethkurtz@house.mi.gov</a>
Representative Marty Knollenberg	(877) 248-0001	<a href="mailto:martyknollenberg@house.mi.gov">martyknollenberg@house.mi.gov</a>
Speaker Jase Bolger	(877) 265-4371	<a href="mailto:jasebolger@house.mi.gov">jasebolger@house.mi.gov</a>

Here are some talking points:

- ✓ About 80,000 Michigan elders fall victim to some form of abuse each year.
- ✓ Last year, Adult Protective Services received 19,000 calls reporting abuse, up from 12,000 calls in 2000.
- ✓ 70% of abusers are 'trusted ones,' including spouses, children, grandchildren and friends. Victims come from all walks of life and income classes, as witnessed by Mickey Rooney's testimony before the Congress.
- ✓ Michigan's high rate of unemployment is fueling the financial exploitation of the elderly.