



**AREA AGENCIES ON AGING ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN**  
**ADVOCACY ALERT**  
**September 20, 2010**

**THREE MONTHS LEFT FOR ACTION ON ELDER ABUSE BILLS**

**BACKGROUND:**

Four 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. Legislation has been introduced in the intervening years to implement the recommendations, but all of the bills have perished due to inaction by one or both houses. Bills were once again introduced in the 2009-2010 session; however, if action isn't taken soon, the bills will die and have to be reintroduced next year.

Five bills have passed the House of Representatives and are sitting in Senate Committees waiting for action.

- House Bill 5011 would allow a third party to file a complaint of elder abuse; it's in the Senate Judiciary Committee, chaired by Sen. Wayne Kuipers.
- House Bill 5191 would allow nursing home staff to report abuse directly to the Department of Community Health; it's in the Senate Families and Human Services Committee, chaired by Sen. Mark Jansen.
- House Bill 5193 would expand the legal definition of abuse to include financial exploitation; it's in the Senate Senior Citizens & Veterans Affairs Committee, chaired by Sen. Jason Allen.
- House Bill 5195 would prohibit an abuser from inheriting his/her victim's assets; it's also in the Senate Judiciary Committee.
- House Bill 5210 would require a protocol be followed to ensure thorough abuse investigations; it's also in the Senate Senior Citizens & Veterans Affairs Committee.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:**

Contact these Senate Committee Chairmen and ask them to take action on the elder abuse bills in their committee:

Sen. Wayne Kuipers	(877) 584-7377	<a href="mailto:senkuipers@senate.michigan.gov">senkuipers@senate.michigan.gov</a>
Sen. Mark Jansen	(866) 305-2128	<a href="mailto:senmjansen@senate.michigan.gov">senmjansen@senate.michigan.gov</a>
Sen. Jason Allen	(866) 525-5637	<a href="mailto:senjallen@senate.michigan.gov">senjallen@senate.michigan.gov</a>

Here are some talking points:

- An estimated 73,000 older Michigianians are victims of elder abuse, according to the 2006 Elder Abuse Task Force report.
- Michigan's high rate of unemployment is fueling the financial exploitation of the elderly.
- These bills are basic, common sense approaches to uncovering this hidden problem and obtaining justice for the victims.