



**AREA AGENCIES ON AGING ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN
ADVOCACY ALERT
October 28, 2009**

TELL SENATOR LEVIN YOU SUPPORT 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:

Project 2020 has been introduced as freestanding legislation, but N4A wants to get 2020 included in the health reform legislation now moving through Congress. Senator Debbie Stabenow has already indicated strong support for 2020 by cosponsoring 2020 legislation in the Senate (S. 1257). Senator Levin's staff has indicated 'he is likely' to support 2020 when an amendment is introduced on the Senate floor this month

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Send a brief message by phone or through his website to Senator Carl Levin indicating that you support Project 2020 and you hope that he will vote for it when it is introduced as an amendment to health reform legislation. His phone number is (202) 224-6221 and his website is www.levin.senate.gov

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

- Older adults want to live in their own homes as long as possible. Investing in home and community-based care is more cost-effective than paying hospital bills and nursing home bills. On average, home-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.