



AREA AGENCIES ON AGING ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN
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In Lansing this week . . . Governor Snyder announced he will unveil a 20-page “Citizen’s Guide to State Finances” next Monday, providing a glimpse into the administration’s thinking about the 2012-13 red ink budget. The report is expected to highlight unfunded pension liabilities of \$18 billion and unfunded retiree health care liabilities of \$40 billion. Also expected – a comparison of state government compensation with the private sector, showing that state workers have not suffered the cutbacks seen in the private sector. The Governor also called for local governments and school districts to release their own plan English balance sheets.

Item pricing legislation was introduced this week . . . in the Michigan House of Representatives by Rep. Lisa Posthumus Lyons, and a hearing on the bill (House Bill 4158) is scheduled next Tuesday in the House Commerce Committee. Governor Snyder called for the elimination of the Item Pricing Law as an example of a burdensome regulation. Retailers say that newer technologies including portable scanners and printouts have made item pricing unnecessary and a waste of money at an annual cost of \$2.2 billion. Labor unions are opposed to the repeal saying it will cost thousands of jobs and make it harder for consumers to know what they are spending. The latter sentiment was echoed in a recent public opinion poll showing that 51% of Michigan citizens are against repealing the law and only 39% support repeal. Senior groups have opposed item pricing for decades because memory, mobility and vision impairments make it hard for some older adults to read and remember shelf stickers.

The House Health Policy Committee . . . met for the first time this week, chaired by Representative Gail Haines. The group was briefed by Community Health Legislative Liaison (and former State Senator) Tony Stamas who provided an overview of the Department of Community Health. Stamas emphasized the two health “dashboard” measures announced by the Governor in his State of the State Address -- infant mortality and obesity. DCH Director Olga Dazzo is also highlighting these dashboard items in her conversations with stakeholder groups.

Did You Know? Free housecleaning is available . . . for women undergoing any type of cancer treatment thanks to the Cleaning For A Reason Foundation, www.cleaningforareason.org. The group partners with professional cleaning companies that are insured, bonded and do background checks.

The Long Term Care Commission met this week . . . and heard a presentation from Medicaid Director Steve Fitton on the “Integrated Care Initiative.” The state is applying for a competitive \$1 million planning grant to develop a managed care model serving dual eligibles. Fifteen grants are available nationwide to states who pledge to hit the ground running after the one-year period. Chuck Milligan, a nationally recognized expert on managed care, has been hired to consult on the project. Michigan has about 200,000 dual eligibles, costing both Medicare and Medicaid over \$3 billion a year, or an average of \$30,000+ each.

The Commission also heard from Cynthia Farrell from the Department of Human Services, who provided FY 2010 figures for Adult Protective Services. There were 18,000 referrals in 2010, resulting in 11,000 opened cases, with 3,200 of those substantiated. Over 60% of the cases involved adults over 60, and 59% were women.