

The Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging also opposes these amendments.
Please follow instructions below.

From: Al Norman [mailto:anorman@fchcc.org]
Sent: Tuesday, April 27, 2010 10:45 AM
To: Robert.DeLeo@Hou.state.ma.us
Subject: Re: TWO ELDERLY BUDGET AMENDMENTS WE OPPOSE!
Importance: High

To: Members of the House
Fr: Al Norman, Mass Home Care

There are **2 elderly-related amendments that Mass Home Care feels should be opposed** because of the adverse impacts they would have on the elderly.

Here is the background on why you should oppose these two items:

Amendment 31 would force 130,000 low income elders to join a managed care plan they did not freely pick. Elders would be "passively enrolled" into a plan they might not want, and have to actively work to disenroll. This robs them of their freedom of choice. Here is the language:

"that the bill be amended by adding the following section to the end of the bill:
"Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the executive office of health and human services shall make all reasonable efforts to renegotiate the commonwealth's 1115 waiver to permit passive opt-out enrollment for the senior care options plan as expeditiously as possible."

Amendment 223 earmarks \$35 million more for nursing home rate increases---but doesn't increase the bottom line of the account---so **the \$35 million would have to come out of existing community-based services**. This means that instead of investing MORE into community based programs for seniors, the House would have to give \$35 million LESS to community programs in order to give nursing facilities higher rates. Since nursing facilities now get 61% of Medicaid long term care dollars, this is like robbing a poor Peter to pay a rich Paul. Here is the language:

"that the bill be amended in Section 2, in item 4000-0600, by adding the following:
"provided further that effective July 1, 2010 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011, the division of health care finance and policy shall establish nursing facility MassHealth rates that fully recognize the Medicaid share of the nursing home assessment established by section 25 of Chapter 118G of the General Laws and as amended by outside section 39; and \$35 million in payments above the payments made to nursing facilities for the fiscal year ended 2010, for the purpose of funding inflationary labor benefit and other costs."