



At the Center of it All

January 3, 2017

The Honorable Charles Baker
Office of the Governor
Room 280
Massachusetts State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Baker:

On behalf of the 350 communities that have established a municipally based Council on Aging, the Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging (MCOA) would like to wish you a belated Happy 60th Birthday. You now join over 1.5 million Massachusetts residents who are age 60 and older. Concurrently, a second major milestone was reached on December 31, 2016. For the first time in recorded history, Massachusetts citizens 60 and older outnumbered those citizens aged 20 and younger. This statistic has been verified by the by UMASS's Donahue Institute. "Times are a changing".

MCOA would also like to thank you for signing the FY17 GAA, which increased funding for Line Item #9110-9002, Local Aid to COAs and more commonly referred to as the Formula Grant to COA's, from \$9 to \$10/elder/year. We made it clear to our membership that recent 9c cuts to the line item did not impact the COA Formula Grant and we are pleased that the \$10/elder/year has been authorized.

MCOA's goal is to increase the Formula Grant to \$12/elder before 2020. We plan to accomplish this goal through incremental increases in the Formula Grant in a fashion similar to the legislated minimum wage. To meet this goal, an additional \$1.3million/year is needed for two of the next three budget cycles leading up to FY2020. As the first stop on the elder care continuum, our statewide network of Councils on Aging and Senior Centers have experienced overwhelming demand for services. The Formula Grant increases that have been received do not keep pace with this growth.

The Formula Grant is allocated based on the US Federal Census. Since the release of the latest Census figures in 2010, the 60+ age cohort in Massachusetts has increased by more than 220,000 individuals and now comprises 22% of the Commonwealth's total population. By the next US Census in the year 2020, projections indicate that the 60 and older population will comprise 24% of the Commonwealth's population. The Donahue Institute at UMASS/Boston estimates that between 2010 and 2035, the age 60+ cohort will increase on average 45,661 people/year while the twenty and under cohort will actually decrease by 1613 people/year.

Projection of the Population by Age Cohort

Population	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
60+	1,273,271	1,493,156	1,721,462	1,925,417	2,049,347	2,098,125
0-19	1,621,143	1,575,847	1,567,780	1,560,991	1,563,211	1,564,122
20-59	3,653,215	3,723,588	3,632,485	3,619,470	3,618,568	3,657,222
total	6,547,629	6,792,591	6,921,727	7,105,878	7,231,126	7,319,469

Data Source: Donahue Institute, UMASS/Boston

Projection of the Percentage of Population by Age Cohort

Population	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
60+ % MA Pop	0.1944	0.2198	0.2487	0.2709	0.2834	0.2866
20 & under % MA Pop	0.2475	0.2319	0.2265	0.2196	0.2161	0.2136
20-59 % MA Pop	0.5579	0.5481	0.5247	0.5093	0.5004	0.4996

Data Source: Donahue Institute, UMASS/Boston

P2: FY18 Request for Line Item #9110-9002

Municipal Councils on Aging are the first stop on the elder care continuum and are currently serving three distinct groups of older adults: the WWII generation, the Silent Generation, and the Baby Boomers. As you can well imagine, their needs are complex and varied. The demand for services continues to increase particularly for healthy aging and wellness programs, transportation, supportive day programs, job search programs, and for assistance with accessing Federal and State benefits. Just as in the fifties and sixties when local and state government had to build new schools and allocate additional funding for education and youth programs, the state needs to recognize that we now need to increase our delivery of services for older adults.

We have been most appreciative of the Administration's support of our programs and services. We recognize the financial significance of the goal that we are trying to accomplish. However, we would like to call to your attention the fact that the Formula Grant is the only standardized funding that municipal Councils on Aging receive from the Commonwealth. We currently work with over two dozen State agencies to carry forth our joint mission to meet the needs of older adults. We are partners with the State in identifying challenges and implementing programs and services to meet these needs.

As we approach FY'18, we ask your support in three ways:

- MCOA's membership is keenly aware of that these are uncertain fiscal times and many line items have experienced stagnate and/or decreased funding. At this time, MCOA's **membership voted to request level funding for FY18 which would be \$14.2million for line item #9110-9002**. We are hoping that in FY19 your House 2 budget proposal will include setting the Formula Grant at \$11/elder which would increase line item# 9110-9002 to \$15.5million.
- **We do ask that you formally recognize in the FY18 budget that Line Item #9110-9002 is a local aid line item as it was once designated.**
- **Over the next two years, we would ask you to increase the presence from the corner office at local senior centers and MCOA sponsored events to help us promote the many initiatives that we both sponsor.** Your visibility and that of the Lt. Governor will help emphasize the need for state, and local governments to recognize the changing demographics and prepare for the future of our Commonwealth.

As previously stated, COAs are the frontline of the eldercare continuum, have experienced tremendous growth from the boomer generation while still trying to assist older generations, and have worked in close partnership with the Administration to implement your stated goals. We hope that we can count on your support as outlined above.

Again, thank you for your past support and thank you for your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,



Brian O'Grady
MCOA President, & Director, Williamstown COA



Jayne Colino
MCOA Legislative Chair, & Director, Newton COA

cc: Lt. Governor Karen Polito, Secretary Kristen Lepore, Secretary Marylou Sudders, Secretary Alice Bonner