

February 27, 2017

The 190<sup>th</sup> General Court  
Massachusetts State House  
Boston, MA 02133



*At the Center of it All*

MCOA would like to thank the members of the 189<sup>th</sup> General Court for their support of line item #9110-9002, Local Aid to municipally based Councils on Aging, more commonly referred to as the Formula Grant to COA's. The Membership of MCOA appreciates that the Legislature listened to our request and provided funding that increased the Formula Grant from \$9 to \$10/elder/year for FY'17. This is the second step in our goal to reach \$12/elder by 2020.

- As the 190<sup>th</sup> General Court begins its session we wanted to outline our specific requests for FY18-20: FY18 Level Funding at \$14.2million = \$10/elder/YEAR
- FY19 Increase to \$15.6million = \$11/elder/YEAR
- FY20 Increase to \$17million = \$12/elder/YEAR

All of these incremental increases in the Formula Grant, in a fashion similar to the legislated minimum wage, will greatly help municipal COAs to keep pace with the growth of the older adult population. As you know, the Formula Grant is based on the US Federal Census from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 and does not account for the current growth in this population since 2010.

We devised our five-year campaign to raise this local aid grant by \$4/year to have built in "pause" year and we have elected to choose FY18 as the year we request level funding. We will resume our campaign in FY19 & FY20 with formal requests as stated above.

As stated above, the Formula Grant is allocated based on the US Federal Census. Since the release of the latest 2010 Census, 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.

**We estimate that as of December 31, 2016, for the first time in recorded history, there are more residents of our Commonwealth age 60+ than under the age of 20.**

**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**

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 Legislature's and Administration's support of our programs and services. We recognize the financial significance of the overall 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 FY18, 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 \$15.6million.
- **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.**
- **And finally, MCOA is concerned about the findings –of the Legislature's Elder Economic Security Commission and the most recent findings from UMASS/Boston's Gerontology Institute. Many of the older adults that COA's work with and serve are greatly affected by these findings.** MCOA is working with several organizations to provide solutions to this crisis that we will be announcing soon. When solutions are formulated and made public, we will be asking for the support of the legislature to help us implement these solutions. The findings indicate:
  - Massachusetts older adults are economically insecure, with 61% of single households lacking sufficient funds to age in place;
  - due to our high costs of housing, food and transportation the Massachusetts disparity is identified as approximately \$10,000/elder
  - Massachusetts is 49<sup>th</sup>, only above Mississippi, as a state where a retiree can afford to live.

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