

# Message of Encouragement

Excepted From: MCOA Legislative Alert FY14-01A Legislative Ask      Dated: February 15, 2013

## This is not rocket science: SIMPLY

1. Call their office and ask he the Representative or Senator would have time (30-60 minutes) next week to stop by the Senior Center to discuss the FY14 Budget, your COA programs and services, and the needs of the constituents you serve.
2. Prior to the meeting assemble a promotional packet showcasing your center (brochure of services, a recent newsletter, annual report, town budget, etc) ALSO download our [Open Letter to the 188th General Court of Massachusetts FY14 Funding Request for Line Item #9110-9002](#) posted at [www.mcoaonline.com](http://www.mcoaonline.com)
3. Prior to the meeting rehearse your ask: "We provide these services to this # of residents; we get requests to provide additional services but have no funding (unmet need); and with additional funding we could meet that need."
4. When the Representative/ Senator arrives take them on a tour of the Center (even if they have been there before) introduce them to participants (this step is a good reason to schedule visit during a 'busy' time)
5. In the meeting also invite a staff person, a board member, and/or a participant to join you if you feel they can represent your agency and the 'ask'. This is a good time to find who is connected with that legislator (I babysat her as a kid, I taught him math in 7th grade, I campaign for her, etc)
6. Thank them for their previous support- though only 91 Representatives and 24 Senators signed our floor amendments last year (see FY13 Honor Roll posted at [www.mcoaonline.com](http://www.mcoaonline.com) ) that restored the Formula Grant back to \$7/YEAR- ultimately the budget passed unanimously so everybody should be thanked. Let them know what you are doing with the restored money- "How does it help you get the job done?"
7. Again thank them but say that it not enough: "We are still down \$925,000 in Service Incentive Grant funding due to this recession which was also part of Line Item #9110-9002 and we are asking for that to be fully restored as well. Also the Formula Grant was set at \$7/YEAR way back in FY09- it is time to increase it by ONE DOLLAR/YEAR to \$8/elder/YEAR to meet the increased demand we are seeing at our centers and to address the unmet need." Notes: a. an additional \$1.3million is needed for Formula Grant; and b. the Service Incentive Grant has funded all of our regionalization efforts and it has funded new programs and innovative services.
8. Stress that to accomplish both of these requests **Line Item #9110-9002 should be set at \$11.5million for FY14.**
9. Listen understandably when they say there is not allot of money. But remind them it is about priorities and you "hope they make COAs a priority when they meet with leadership" Ask them can we count on their support throughout the whole process and will they keep you informed.
10. Be respectful and thank them for listening to your request. FOLLOW-UP with a thank you note reiterating your ask.
11. If your share that Representative or Senator with another town call that COA Director and report what you heard and advise them of any talking points that seemed to work and those that did not work.
12. Report to MCOA (david@mcoaonline.com) and your Regional Representatives the outcome- go to [www.mcoaonline.com](http://www.mcoaonline.com) scroll down to the fourth box and look for MCOA Leadership: Districts and Regions for contact info and definition of your 'region' (based on ASAP territories) and your 'district' (west, central, metro, south shore, north shore)

If everybody does their part (30 minute meeting with a specific ask for COAs to be a priority) we can accomplish this goal but **EVERYBODY** has to do their part. Thank you for your time and effort with this coordinated campaign.