

STAND UP

for our

SENIORS

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

The senior programs YOU receive are at risk!
In this toolkit you will find:

- Legislative Listings
- Senior Services Funding Script
- Infographic Handout
- Sample Letter
- Sample Social Media Posts





ADVOCACY TOOLBOX

Information from the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan. Our West Michigan region includes Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Newaygo, and Osceola counties.

Michigan Senators

Name	District	Contact: P.O. Box 30036, Lansing, MI 48909	County
Thomas Albert	Senate District 18	Phone: 517-373-1734 Email: sentalbert@senate.michigan.gov	Allegan Ionia Kent
Winne Brinks	Senate District 29	Phone: (517) 373-1801 Email: senwbrinks@senate.michigan.gov	Kent
Jon Bumstead	Senate District 32	Phone: (517) 373-1635 Email: senjbumstead@senate.michigan.gov	Mason
Roger Hauck	Senate District 34	Phone: (517) 373-1760 Email: senrhauck@senate.michigan.gov	Mecosta, Osceola
Mark Huizenga	Senate District 30	Phone: (517) 373-0797 Email: senmhuizenga@senate.michigan.gov	Kent
Aric Nesbitt	Senate District 20	Phone: (517) 373-0793 Email: senanesbitt@senate.michigan.gov	Allegan, Kent
Rick Outman	Senate District 33	Phone: (517) 373-3760 Email: senroutman@senate.michigan.gov	Ionia, Kent, Lake, Montcalm, Newaygo
Roger Victory	Senate District 31	Phone: (517) 373-6920 Email: senrvictory@senate.michigan.gov	Allegan

Michigan House of Representatives

Name	Contact: P.O. Box 30014, Lansing, MI 48909	County
Joey Andrews	Phone: 517-373-0827 Email: joeyandrews@house.mi.gov	Allegan
Nancy DeBoer	Phone: (517) 373-0846 Email: nancydeboer@house.mi.gov	Allegan
John Fitzgerald	Phone: (517) 373-0835 Email: johnfitzgerald@house.mi.gov	Kent
Graham Filler	Phone: (517) 373-1778 Email: grahamfiller@house.mi.gov	Ionia, Montcalm
Joseph Fox	Phone: (517) 373-0825 Email: josephfox@house.mi.gov	Lake, Mason, Newaygo
Carol Glanville	Phone: (517) 373-0476 Email: caglanville@house.mi.gov	Kent
Kristian Grant	Phone: (517) 373-1800 Email: kristiangrant@house.mi.gov	Kent
Matt Hall	Phone: (517) 373-1787 Email: matthall@house.mi.gov	Allegan
Stephen Wooden	Phone: (517) 373-1790 Email: stephenwooden@house.mi.gov	Kent

Michigan House of Representatives Cont.

Name	Contact: P.O. Box 30014, Lansing, MI 48909	County
Gina Johnsen	Phone: 517-373-1796 Email: ginajohnsen@house.mi.gov	Ionia, Kent
Tom Kunse	Phone: (517) 373-7317 Email: tomkunse@house.mi.gov	Lake, Mecosta, Osceola
Pat Outman	Phone: (517) 373-3436 Email: patoutman@house.mi.gov	Ionia, Kent, Montcalm
Bryan Posthumus	Phone: (517) 373-0830 Email: bryanposthumus@house.mi.gov	Kent
Angela Rigas	Phone: (517) 373-1403 Email: angelarigas@house.mi.gov	Allegan, Kent
Phil Skaggs	Phone: (517) 373-0836 Email: philskaggs@house.mi.gov	Kent
Rachelle Smit	Phone: (517) 373-0615 Email: rachellesmit@house.mi.gov	Allegan
Curtis VanderWall	Phone: (517) 373-1747 Email: curtisvanderwall@house.mi.gov	Mason
Pauline Wendzel	Phone: (517) 373-1799 Email: paulinewendzel@house.mi.gov	Allegan

United States Congress Members

Name	Contact:	County
Senator Elissa Slotkin	United States Senate 825B Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510-2204 Phone: (202) 224-4822	Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Newaygo Osceola
Senator Gary Peters	United States Senate 724 Hart Senate Office Building Washington DC 20510 Phone: (202) 224-6221	Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Newaygo Osceola
The Honorable John Moolenaar	United States House of Representatives 246 Cannon House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202) 225-3561	Ionia, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Newaygo Osceola
The Honorable Hillary Scholten	United States House of Representatives 1317 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202) 225-3831	Kent
The Honorable Bill Huizenga	United States House of Representatives 2232 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202) 225-4401	Allegan

Tips for Engaging with Your LEGISLATORS

Advocacy is the act of supporting, promoting, or speaking out for a cause, idea, policy, or group. It involves efforts to influence decision-makers, public opinion, and systems to bring about social, political, economic, or environmental change.

Introduce Yourself and Your Connection to the Area

Clearly state who you are, where you live, and why their decisions matter to you. Emphasize that you are a constituent, and they represent your concerns.

Make it Personal

A personal story—yours or a client’s—can make a powerful impact. A brief, heartfelt statement helps put a human face on the issue and strengthens your message.

Be specific

Clearly outline the action you want them to take. Do you want them to support or oppose a specific bill? Speak out on an issue? Vote a certain way? Providing a clear action item increases the likelihood of a response.

Share the Impact

Numbers can strengthen your message. Share a compelling statistic—such as the number of people affected, services provided, or community impact—to reinforce the urgency and importance of your request.

Ways to Advocate

You can choose the platform that works best for you:

- Make a phone call
- Send an email
- Write a letter

All forms of communication matter and contribute to change

Does My Call Make a Difference?

Absolutely! Staffers track and tally calls on key issues, and a high volume of outreach can influence decision-making. Your voice counts!



AREA
AGENCY
ON AGING
OF WESTERN
MICHIGAN

STAND UP *for* SENIORS

Protect Essential Services for Seniors and Caregivers-
they are not luxuries, they are *lifelines.*



“
**I feel very safe
living alone,
knowing your
service is a
button away.**
”

Older adults and family caregivers in our region depend on vital services like home-delivered meals, in-home care, respite support, and transportation to remain independent and age with choice.

Without continued funding:



**Over 18,000
older adults will
lose services**

A **13% increase** in clients over the last 3 years, and demand continues to rise



**Waitlists will
grow** Already,

seniors in our community are waiting for key services, with some having **8+ month** wait times



**Effective programs
will be cut**, despite

proven impact. Every \$1 invested helps prevent costly hospitalizations and long-term care placements

Act now to ensure these critical services continue! Contact Congress!

Senior Services Funding Script/Talking Points

2 main points- simplified

1. Proven impact- over 18,000 West Michigan older adults served and growing

2. Cost effective- fraction of nursing home cost

Call Script

Hello, my name is [Your Name], and I am reaching out from [your community]. I'm reaching out to urge you to ensure continued funding for critical programs that help older adults in West Michigan remain safe, independent, and in their homes. Thousands of seniors and caregivers rely on services like home-delivered meals, in-home care, respite support, and transportation—lifelines that prevent costly hospitalizations and long-term care placements.

Why This Matters:

For over 50 years, these cost-effective programs, administered by Area Agencies on Aging nationwide, have had strong bipartisan support because they work. They help seniors age at home while reducing healthcare costs. But without immediate action, we face devastating consequences in our region:

- **18,000 older adults in West Michigan** will lose access to services they depend on
- **Demand is surging-** We've seen a **13% increase** in clients over the last three years, with waitlists now stretching **over 8 months** for some programs
- **In-home care is a smart investment--** it costs far less than nursing home care and helps seniors stay where they want to be. Every \$1 invested in these services prevents expensive hospitalizations and long-term care placements, saving taxpayers significantly.
- **Cutting these programs will force more seniors into institutional settings,** dramatically increasing costs for families and the healthcare system

Take Action Now:

I urge you to protect and invest in Older Americans Act programs. Without this funding, more seniors will be forced into costly institutional care, creating a greater financial burden on families, taxpayers, and the healthcare system. Please act now to sustain these critical services.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to serving our community.

Dear _____,

I am deeply concerned about the ongoing threats to essential services for our most vulnerable citizens. Funding for critical programs through the Older Americans Act (OAA) is uncertain, putting seniors, veterans, and individuals with disabilities at risk of losing the support they rely on to maintain their independence and well-being.

The Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan (AAAWM) plays a vital role in supporting these individuals by providing home-delivered meals, in-home care, and transportation assistance—services that are lifelines for thousands of individuals in our community. Demand in West Michigan continues to grow, with over 18,000 seniors in AAWM’s nine-county region currently being served through OAA and MI Choice programs, and waitlists stretching over eight months for some programs. Programs such as Meals on Wheels of Western Michigan, a key recipient of these funds, serve over 375,000 meals annually, with 79% of homebound recipients depending on these meals as their primary source of nutrition.

Many of these individuals live in your district, and I urge you to take immediate action to safeguard their well-being. These services are not optional; they ensure dignity, independence, and survival for those in need. Seniors, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and their families cannot afford to be caught in political disputes that delay necessary support. I implore you to stand up for your constituents and ensure that funding for these crucial programs remains secure and uninterrupted.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I appreciate your dedication to serving our community and look forward to your response regarding your plan to protect these essential services.

Sincerely,

Senior Advocate

Address:

Social Media Sample Posts

How to share:

1. **Copy text**, add your own service focus or client story if you'd like
2. **Save image**, Choose the "download image" link, this should open an image that you can save for sharing later
3. **Follow along** on our socials to share from there:
 - a. www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAging
 - b. www.linkedin.com/company/area-agency-on-aging-of-western-michigan-inc

Stand Up for Seniors

Where do you want to grow old? For most, the answer is simple: at home, surrounded by the people and places we love. But without funding for services like home care, meal delivery, and transportation, many older adults lose that choice. Aging with dignity should be a right—not a privilege. Let's fight for senior services! #AgeYourWay #ProtectSeniorCare

STAND UP for our SENIORS

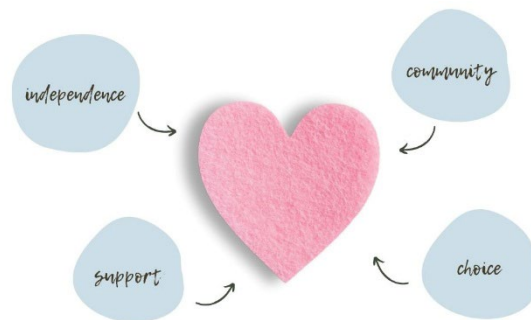
The federal funding we receive is in jeopardy! This funding is:

- 1 **PROVEN**
Over 50 years of bipartisan support
- 2 **COST EFFECTIVE**
Saving federal dollars by **reducing** care costs
- 3 **CRITICAL**
Championing **independence** through meals, transportation, in-home support & more
- 4 **IMPACTFUL**
This funding is essential for **over 18,000** older adults in our region each year with an ever-growing waitlist, in some cases **over 8 months**

[Download Image](#)

General Awareness

Seniors & Caregivers Need Our Support! Vital services like home-delivered meals, in-home care, and transportation aren't luxuries—they're lifelines. But funding cuts put thousands at risk. Let's stand together to protect essential programs. #ProtectSeniorCare #SupportCaregivers



SENIOR SERVICES ARE
NOT LUXURIES, THEY ARE

lifelines



[Download Image](#)

Proven Impact

Did You Know?

For every \$1 spent on home-based care, we prevent thousands in hospitalizations and long-term care costs. Programs like in-home support and meal delivery keep seniors healthier, reducing ER visits and delaying costly nursing home placements. Cutting these services won't save money—it will drive up healthcare costs and strain families. Smart investments today mean lower costs tomorrow. Advocacy matters—help us protect these crucial programs and save lives! #ProvenImpact #HealthAtHome #ProtectSeniorCare

Smarter Spending Saves Lives

AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF WESTERN MICHIGAN

Icon	Statistic
Stethoscope	REDUCES HEALTHCARE COSTS enables older adults to age in place with more independence
House with cross	FRACTION OF NURSING HOME CARE annual nursing home cost: ~\$104,000 /person*
Hands holding heart	CAREGIVER VALUE OF \$522 BILLION informal caregivers contribute over 30 billion hours of care annually

*Genworth Cost of Care Survey 2023

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Caregiver Support

Stronger Together

Family caregivers are the foundation of senior care, but they can't do it alone. Respite services, transportation, and home support help keep families strong. Don't let funding cuts take away these essential lifelines! Speak up today. #CaregiverSupport #CommunityCares #ProtectSeniorCare

Stronger TOGETHER

WRAP AROUND SERVICES

Respite services, transportation, adult day programs, meal delivery, and home support

Relieve the caregiver burden-giving caregivers time to recharge

AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF WESTERN MICHIGAN

PROTECT SENIOR & CAREGIVER SERVICES

[Download Image](#)

Aging in Place

Seniors want to age in place—in their own homes, with dignity and support. But without funding for in-home care and respite services, many face uncertainty. Let's make sure our aging loved ones have the resources they need. Contact Congress today! #AgeYourWay #IndependenceMatters #ProtectSeniorCare

Home is where the heart is



Seniors who age at home tend to be

HEALTHIER,
HAPPIER, and
MORE
INDEPENDENT.



Without funding, thousands of seniors in West Michigan will lose their right to age at home.

*AARP, 2021

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Financial Advantage/ Reach

Cutting senior services doesn't cut costs, it increases them for everyone. When we invest in home care, meal delivery, and respite support, we're not just helping seniors—we're strengthening our entire community. A single senior service impacts all of us. Investing in these programs is the smart financial choice for families, taxpayers, and policymakers alike. Let's protect what works! #CareMatters #ProtectSeniorCare

PROVEN REACH

1 ONE SENIOR SERVICE SUPPORTS...



GOVERNMENT

Efficient use of spending, leveraging nearly 3 dollars for each dollar spent



COMMUNITY

Lower tax-payer costs for at-home care over nursing home care



CAREGIVER

Relieves the caregiver's burden, provides respite



OLDER ADULT

ages in place



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