



Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners to Vote on Senior Millage, County Commission on Aging Created

Most Michigan counties have senior millages that provide funding to support local senior services, including St. Clair and Monroe Counties in Region 1-B. The Say Yes to Seniors Committee has been working towards the goal of creating a senior millage in Washtenaw County.

On July 1, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners took two important actions supported by the Say Yes to Seniors Committee:

- The full Board of Commissioners voted unanimously in favor of creating of a Commission on Aging to serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Commissioners on aging issues, and if and when there is a senior millage, to review proposals and provide recommendations for the use of millage funds to support services. This Commission on Aging will be created effective January 1, 2021.
- The Ways and Means Committee voted in favor of moving the November ballot proposal for a combined 0.5 mill senior services and public health millage to the full Board of Commissioners for action at their August meeting. The full Board of Commissioners is expected to take action to approve or reject the proposal at their August meeting. The combined 0.5 mil senior services and public health millage would provide 0.25 mil to senior services and 0.25 mil to public health.

Washtenaw County residents should contact their county commission to communicate their position on a countywide senior millage before August 5th. To find your County Commissioner visit: <https://aaa1b.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Washtenaw-County-Congressional-and-Legislative-Contacts.pdf>

For more information about the Say Yes to Seniors Committee, visit www.sayyestoseniors.com

State Lawmakers Release Framework for FY 2020 Budget Deal

The COVID-19 pandemic created massive revenue shortfalls in the state budget, reducing the funding available to spend in the current fiscal year (FY 2020). Legislative leaders and the Governor announce agreement on a plan to close this spending gap. The deal reduces state spending by approximately \$2.2 billion and balances the state budget for the current fiscal year. Elements of the budget deal include: \$350 million to be taken from the rainy day fund, \$490 savings from a state hiring freeze, \$340 Medicaid match relief from federal Cares Act, and \$950 in federal Cares Act funding which will offset some state expenses.

In a win for aging advocates, the framework does not identify cuts to aging service programs. There is still more work to be done to implement the plan, so future cuts remain a possibility.

Detailed negotiations for the FY 2021 budget, which begins on October 1, 2020, are expected to occur following a revenue estimating conference in August.



The Area Agency on Aging 1-B (AAA 1-B) is a nonprofit agency serving the needs of older adults in Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, and Washtenaw counties. Contact Katie Wendel, (248) 262-9232 or by e-mail at kwendel@aaa1b.org to join the Senior Advocacy Network or receive copies of AAA 1-B reports referenced in The Advocate.

House Subcommittee Recommends Older Americans Act Increases in FY 2021 Federal Budget

The Federal House Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee passed a Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 spending bill which included funding for Older Americans Act (OAA) programs and services.

The recommendations included:

- Increase of \$20 million (2%) for OAA nutrition programs
- increase of \$10 million (2.5%) for OAA Title III B supportive services programs, which funds programs like in home personal care, homemaking and transportation
- Increase of \$10 million (5%) for OAA family caregiver support
- Increase of \$2 million (3.7%) for the State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIP), which funds Michigan's Medicare Medicaid Assistance Program (MMAAP)

The proposal will be vote don by the full House Appropriations Committee before being voted on by the full House. Senate appropriators must also pass their own funding bills, and both chambers need to agree on the budget before any of these measures can move to the President for signature.

It is very unlikely that Congress will finalize any full-year funding bills before the current federal fiscal year ends on September 30. It is expected that Congress will have to pass temporary measures, known as continuing resolutions, to fund the government at FY 2020 levels through the November election.
