

## ***The Commonwealth Council on Aging's Recommendations to the Governor & 2006 General Assembly***



Restore **\$1,020,000** for FY 2007 to the 25 local Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) to be used for **basic home-based services** for older Virginians. Availability of these services has been adversely affected by budget cuts.



Provide **\$1,269,000** to the AAAs for FY 2007 so that they may **continue to provide all of the services they currently offer**. They will be negatively impacted by the new Census data's influence on the Virginia intrastate funding formula.



Allocate an additional **\$7,300,000** to the AAAs for FY 2007 so that they can address their current unmet need for **home-delivered meals**.



Provide an additional **\$912,840** to the AAAs for FY 2007 to provide local/regional **Long-Term Care Ombudsman** services at the level specified in the *Code of Virginia*.

The Commonwealth Council on Aging is composed of 19 citizens from all walks of life and all geographic areas of Virginia. The Council helps state government meet the needs of older Virginians in the most efficient and effective manner. For more information on these recommendations or other issues related to aging, contact:

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## Supporting Data

### Home-Based Services

Home-based services include in-home care, home-delivered meals, group meals, transportation, adult day care, respite care and care coordination. These services are valuable to all Virginians, because they:

- Help older Virginians remain independent;
- Strengthen family support;
- Decrease the risk of inappropriate institutionalization.
- Help people live in their home of choice;
- Improve life satisfaction;

Virginia's 25 Area Agencies on Aging served over **63,000 clients in FY 2003, one-third of which were 80 years of age or older**. Many of them needed assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs), as reported by JLARC.<sup>1</sup>

### Decreases in Funding

While demand for services is growing as the population ages, AAAs have faced state funding cuts for critical services. In addition, some AAAs will be negatively affected by the impact of the new Census data on Virginia's intrastate funding formula. **Based on this data, some AAAs could see as much as a 20% decrease in their funding.**

### Unmet Need for Meals

The monthly unmet need for home-delivered meals is rising. For example, **the average monthly unmet need for meals in FY 2003 was 139,253; in FY 2004 it was 151,500**, as reported by JLARC.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, gasoline, insurance and workers' compensation costs continue to rise.

### LTC Ombudsman

Virginia's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) provides older Virginians, their families and loved ones with information on long-term care options. Ombudsmen assist in resolving concerns about the care being provided in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. They also help residents of long-term care facilities exercise their rights.

Section 2.2-703(A)(10) of the *Code of Virginia* states that the minimum staffing ratio should be 1 FTE ombudsman to every **2,000** long-term care beds, subject to sufficient appropriations. Virginia currently has 1 FTE ombudsman for every **3,325 beds**. If the Northern Virginia LTCOPs are not included, the ratio increases to 1 FTE ombudsman for every **3,644** beds.

Despite the effective use of volunteers, low staffing levels continue to hamper the provision of Ombudsman services. Long-term care residents and their families desperately need their help.

<sup>1</sup> "Interim Report: Impact of Virginia's Aging Population on State Agency Services, Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) of the Virginia General Assembly, 2004".