

AAA Committee Recommendation Report

Report to the AAA Board

Report prepared by: Cheryl Batterman 261-9789
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Date: 4 March 2019

From: Access Committee Legislative/Advocacy Committee Nutrition/Wellness Committee

History/Related Actions

At the 2/27/19 Legislative/Advocacy Committee meeting, advocacy supporting federal and state programs was discussed and resulted in the following recommendation:

Amy Scarr of the Dane County Department of Human Services (DCDHS) Elder Victim Support Project distributed a draft letter to Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul urging his support of the Wisconsin Elder Abuse Task Force, a body of more than 60 stakeholders that was organized by former AG Brad Schimel in 2017. Scarr stated stakeholders believe the letter is necessary because Elder Abuse was not among the initial priorities Kaul outlined after taking office in January. Scarr plans to send the letter on behalf of the Dane County Elder Abuse Coordinator Community Response Committee and asked that the committee consider recommending that the AAA Board also write in support of the task force. McHone will send an email to Wisconsin Association of Senior Center (WASC) members calling for action in support of the task force.

A motion was made by BUNCK, seconded by LEZOTTE, to direct staff to draft a letter for AAA Board consideration stressing the importance of the Attorney General Office's continued support of the Wisconsin Elder Abuse Task Force's efforts in combating elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes 6 BUNCK, DAVIS, FRAZIER, LEZOTTE, MCHONE, OLSON
Absent 2 KAUD, SCHMIDLKOFER

Financial/Budget/Other Resource Implications (if any)

None

Recommendations

To approve the attached draft letter concerning the Wisconsin Elder Abuse Task Force.

Attachments/Links

Wisconsin Elder Abuse Task Force DRAFT Letter

DRAFT Wisconsin Elder Abuse Task Force Letter

Dear Attorney General Josh Kaul,

On behalf of the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) of Dane County's Board of Directors, we urge you to continue the Wisconsin Elder Abuse Task Force's efforts in combating elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

In April 2017, former Attorney General Brad Schimel gathered over 60 stakeholders across Wisconsin to discuss growing concerns related to elder abuse of Wisconsin residents. In August 2017, the Elder Abuse Task Force convened. Task Force membership includes representatives from DOJ, DHS, DFI, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, Wisconsin State Legislature, law enforcement, Wisconsin Court System, Board on Aging and Long Term Care, Wisconsin Bankers Association, crime victim services, adult protective services, senior living facilities, and senior adult advocacy organizations. Task Force objectives included compiling experience, expertise, and resources from all members to better understand the impact of Elder Abuse in Wisconsin and how to improve outcomes for this growing population while strengthening consumer protections.

In October 2018, former Attorney General Brad Schimel, along with Elder Abuse Task Force members, presented five proposals to former Governor Scott Walker and other policy makers. These proposals included:

1. Blocking suspicious financial transactions to stop elder exploitation
2. Use of Elder Abuse Supplemental Incident Reports for Law Enforcement
3. Enhanced protections for the elders through criminal law reforms
4. Expedited hearings and testimony preservation
5. Specialized Elder Abuse Response Team at DOJ

The Elder Abuse Task force also assisted DOJ to develop a public awareness campaign which included radio advertisements, website information, a training video for bank tellers, and the Safe Seniors camera program.

All these efforts come at a critical time as the Wisconsin's elder population is exploding with 10,000 people turning 65 every day; Wisconsin's senior population will increase by 72% by the year 2030. Additionally, elder abuse reports are on the rise—there has been a 160% increase since 2001. Unfortunately this growth only captures a portion of elder abuse as research shows that for every one reported case of elder abuse, 24 cases go unreported.

Elders who experience any form of abuse lose not only possessions and quality of life, but also trust, safety, independence, health, and dignity. Elders also lose relationships with more than half of all reported abusers related to the victim in some way. Lastly, elders and their communities lose \$3 billion dollars per year in financial resources.

Dane County Department of Human Services staff and Elder Abuse Coordinated Community Response Team members provide compassionate and competent response to all reports of elder abuse and exploitation. We urge you to continue the work of the Elder Abuse Task Force in

combating elder abuse within our state and local communities. We believe the Elder Abuse Task Force honors senior adults and respects abuse victims.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Carole Kretschman, Chair

cc: The Honorable Tony Evers, Governor, State of Wisconsin
State Elected Officials
Members, Dane County Board of Supervisors
The Honorable Joe Parisi, Dane County Executive
Ms. Lynn Green, Director, Dane County Department of Human Services