

TESTIMONY BEFORE
THE OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FINANCE COMMITTEE

Wednesday April 26, 2017

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

Presented by
Larke Recchie
CEO

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Cera, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about H.B. 49. I am Larke Recchie, the CEO of the Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging o4a representing the twelve regionally-based Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) in Ohio.

O4a is appreciative of the difficult task before this committee on many issues. We would like to thank the committee for taking a prudent approach to the Governor's proposal to initiate a statewide managed long-term services and supports (MLTSS) system beginning in July, 2018. Implementing MLTSS in Ohio represents an overhaul of the LTSS system that exists in Ohio which is very different from traditional Medicaid managed care. MLTSS is distinguished from MyCare Ohio which is currently in year three of a five year demonstration to integrate Medicare (primarily medical) and Medicaid (primarily LTSS) for people who are eligible for both programs. This demonstration is perfectly positioned to be mined for information to review whether and how to appropriately move forward with managed LTSS, and whether it can provide cost savings with exemplary outcomes and experiences for beneficiaries.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) have a successful record assisting people in maintaining their independence in the community. Approximately 300,000 Ohioans are touched by the programs funded, administered, or care managed by Ohio's AAAs. From the inception of

PASSPORT in the early 1990's when the ratio of people age 60+ paid by Medicaid in nursing facilities vs those in home and community care was 90 to 10, the AAAs moved the balance to nearly 50/50 before MyCare Ohio was launched in 2014 saving the state billions of dollars. They have achieved remarkable success with consistently high satisfaction rates some years reaching above 99%. It is not sensible to dismantle this established and consistently effective program without further study.

While the demonstration is ongoing, the AAAs providing waiver service and care coordination in MyCare remain committed to creating successful health and quality of life outcomes for individuals with their respective health plans. Until the MyCare demonstration is completed however -- and a thorough evaluation of MyCare is conducted that would provide the data and context for looking at an expanded MLTSS program statewide -- we are concerned that the move to MLTSS in this biennium is premature.

The Area Agencies on Aging's other budget priorities include increasing the safety net for older Ohioans who want to remain independent in their homes. We ask that you support increased funding to provide more meals, transportation, personal care, home modification and other critical senior services. By restoring funding to the Senior Community Services line item to SFY 2001 levels to address the home and community needs of people just above a Medicaid eligibility -- both functionally and financially -- Ohio can ultimately prevent or delay the entry into Medicaid. A small investment in this program will reap considerable benefits in health outcomes and Medicaid savings.

As to our other budget priority, we thank the committee for including a modest increase in Adult Protective Services funding. However, the need will continue to grow, and only by adequately funding adult protective services to provide at least \$65,000 per county for workers to

investigate and prosecute elder abuse can Ohio further prevent unnecessary expense in Medicaid and much hardship for this vulnerable people.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today.