

Minutes

Legislative Advocacy Committee

Governor's Commission on Senior Services

April 22, 2004

Keizer, Oregon

Attendees: Helen Liere, Chair; Dolores Raymond, Vice-Chair; Don Butsch; Linda Miller; Jack Ewing; Tim Malone; Eunice Dutton; and Bob Lawrence

Staff: Jane-ellen Weidanz and Sherry Whitehead

Guests: Ruth Shepherd

Excused: Dolores Hubert; Harvey Roth; Ham Jackson; and Barbara Brewer-Nelson

Called Meeting to Order

Approved April 2004 Minutes.

Announcements

Oregon Food Bank has created a website that is wonderful for advocates. Go to: www.oregonfoodbank.org and follow the links to action alerts. You can email a very nice looking letter to your Representative and Senators.

Federal Issues

BUDGET: GCSS sent a letter to the Congressional Delegation about the budget resolutions that would have resulted in significant cuts to social service programs, especially Medicaid. The final budget only cut the "extra" Federal Medicaid Match Rate that states received due to the poor economy. We will be going back to the regular match rate this year. Senators Smith and Wyden were instrumental in preventing deeper cuts.

Motion: Recommend to the full Commission that we send a letter to Senators Wyden and Smith thanking them for their continuing work on protecting Medicaid. (Don Butsch) *Passed*

MEDICARE: The funds that Congress made available to educate the public about the changes to Medicare, namely the new prescription drug benefits, are being used for national TV and radio ads and to fund the Medicare toll-free number and website. Very little of the funds are being allocated to the states or local communities.

MOTION: Recommend to the full Commission that we send a letter to the Congressional Delegation asking that additional funds be made available for public education efforts regarding Medicare Modernization Act at the local level. (Eunice Dutton) *Passed*

Action Item:	Assigned To:	Deadline:
Send a letter to Senator Wyden and Smith thanking them for their work on protecting Medicaid.	Helen	6/15/04
Send a letter to the Congressional Delegation regarding funds for public education on the Medicare Modernization Act.	Helen	6/15/04

Update on State Revenue Issues

Discussed the Interim Committees on Revenue. The Joint Committee could not reach agreement so it disbanded. Speaker Minnis created a House Interim Committee on Revenue. They heard today that the state will have \$108 million ending balance for this biennium. However, there is still a shortfall of \$492 million for next biennium because of one time fixes used this biennium. The Interim Committee finished their work today with a final proposal they are forwarding to Speaker Minnis. It included a legislative concept (LC 10), which includes a cap on state expenditure growth to 8.1% per biennium and creation of a 15% “rainy day” fund. Discussed possible actions and decided to wait and see if there is a Special Session.

New Front Door

Bob Lawrence provided an update on the New Front Door Proposal. SPD is not going forward with a Policy Option Package. They will be looking for grants instead. At the next meeting they will be discussing more details about the program. There are still concerns being expressed that the Commission did not endorse the program and people are saying that we opposed the proposal. In actuality, the Commission highlighted some concerns that the Commission thought needed to be addressed during the planning process. Other advocates have also expressed similar concerns.

Intergeneration Advocacy

Ruth Shepherd joined the Committee again to discuss possible intergenerational advocacy ideas. Discussed that members may want to develop ideas to bring to Planning Days. Ideas mentioned included: Recognizing effective intergenerational programs, at our Annual Celebration; Developing intergenerational issue talking points and sharing with other advocates; Meeting with children’s advocates to discuss possible intergenerational advocacy efforts; and working on “Grandparents Raising Grandchildren” issues.