



**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Governor's Advisory Council on Aging**

Roy Cooper
Governor

Dempsey E. Benton
Interim Secretary

James Richard Scott
Chairperson

January 5, 2017

The Honorable Governor Roy Cooper
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699

Dear Governor Cooper,

On behalf of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, I would like to offer our congratulations and best wishes on your election. The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging has been in existence since the early 70's and it is our duty to make recommendations to you and the Secretary of Health and Human Services on finding ways to improve services for older adults. With honor and pride, I serve as the Chairman of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging. We are grateful to all of our council members and colleagues who have been instrumental in the success of the Council.

As a council, we have spent the past year dedicated to seeking what is truly important to older adults in North Carolina. As authorized by legislation (NCGS 143B-180), we are submitting our recommendations for your consideration for the coming legislative year. Our 2017 legislative recommendations are as follows:

- The Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG), a combination of federal, state and local matching funds, supports an array of social services, such as home delivered meals, in-home aide services, and transportation. Currently, there are approximately 10,000 people on a growing waiting list for HCCBG services. Meeting the needs of those on the waiting list, would require an additional \$20 million in recurring funds. The HCCBG state appropriation of \$969,549 was restored for only fiscal years 2015-16 and 2016-17. **We recommend that the \$969,549 state appropriation to the HCCBG be funded as a recurring appropriation and an additional \$20 million be appropriated to wipe out the waiting list for HCCBG services.**

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- The Adult Protective Services (APS) program, which addresses the needs of victims of neglect, abuse and exploitation, is underfunded and understaffed. APS reports have increased 44% over the past five years with no corresponding increase in funding. Funding for APS comes from the Social Services Block Grant (\$4.3 million), counties (\$17 million) and the State (\$647,035). **We recommend a \$7 million increase in state funding, as well as the review and revision of the APS program authorizing legislation and funding sources.**
- The North Carolina Study Commission on Aging provided a vehicle in the General Assembly to better understand complex issues related to an aging population and to formulate relevant legislation. **We recommend the North Carolina Study Commission on Aging be re-instated.** Currently, 14.6% of our State's population is 65 and over and by 2025, 20% will be 65 and over. Among areas we hope that the Study Commission on Aging would address would be the absence of affordable dental care, the lack of mental health care for older adults and the alarming level of senior hunger and food insecurities. By convening a study commission focused on issues affecting older adults, we believe NC legislators can be better informed and equipped to craft legislation that will effectively meet the unique needs of our aging population.
- We seek solutions to the challenges of our aging population that are a more effective integration of social supports and medical services. This will both lower medical costs and improve healthcare outcomes. PACE programs (Program of All-Inclusive Care of the Elderly) effectively meet this goal. Currently, there are only eleven PACE programs across the State, leaving many areas of the State underserved. **We recommend the expansion of programs such as PACE.**

As a council, we thank you for seriously considering our recommendations. We welcome your request for further details and stand ready to assist you and your staff in any way possible as you address these and other areas that impact the lives of older adults in our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "James Richard Scott". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Cc: Dempsey Benton, Suzanne Merrill, Governor's Advisory Council on Aging