



COMMISSION ON AGING
c/o Agency on Aging, DHS

2100 Washington Blvd., 4th Floor, Arlington, VA 22204
TEL 703-228-1700 FAX 703-228-1147 TTY 703-228-1788 www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Departments/DHS

My name is Linda Kelleher, Chair and a Commissioner with Arlington County's Commission on Aging and a dedicated advocate for older persons. I am 70 years old and have lived in Virginia for 48 years.

In my community and statewide, the population of older adults is growing, and we must do more to support older adults and their caregivers. In Virginia the population of adults aged 60 and older is expected to double by 2050, increasing to 31% of the population. Virginia's most at-risk and vulnerable population, those 85 and older, will more than quadruple by 2050 (157,882 in 2020 to 653,049 in 2050). The population is growing astronomically, but the funding and resources to support this population have lagged.

Virginia's 25 Area Agencies on Aging serve every locality in Virginia and are our front line in supporting our older residents who want to remain in their homes or the homes of family members in the community. Not only is staying in their homes preferred by older Virginians, but it is also the most cost-effective use of resources, far less expensive than nursing home or hospitalizations. Keeping older Virginians in their homes also helps our local economies and businesses.

Area Agencies on Aging serve tens of thousands of Virginians each year with healthy meals, community services, services addressing social determinants of health, transportation, home health services, caregiver supports and other essential supports that protect against hospitalization, and placement in nursing homes. In 2022, the Arlington AAA served more than 2,300 older adults with over 200,000 units of service delivered through 20 distinct programs.

The costs of AAA services are supported by a combination of federal, state, local, and private dollars. The allocation of federal and state funds to each of the 25 Area Agencies on Aging is determined by a funding formula that is administered by the Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services. Due to changes in the funding formula, the Virginia AAA network faces a bureaucratic dilemma in 2023; a gap of \$700,000 in funding. This gap in funding to provide vital services is largely attributable to a federally required update to the funding formula. State supplemental funding will be essential to keep essential home and community-based services in place in certain regions of the Commonwealth as funds are redistributed according to the mandated formula revisions. Without these funds this reallocation of federal and state funds will cause uneven disruptions in services in Arlington and across the Commonwealth. Funds taken from a region means service reductions, specifically, an older adult receiving services on June 30, 2023, will be at risk of not being served after July 1. Although the required redistribution will help 14 AAAs meet their growing needs, without Supplemental Funding, 11 AAAs across the Commonwealth will be eliminating services to older adults being served today.

At a time when our older adult population is the fastest growing demographic in Arlington, the impact of the proposed funding formula will result in an 8 percent reduction in federal and



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state funding. The reduction in funds translates into fewer meals delivered to older adults who are homebound, fewer in-home hours of personal care, less outreach and support to caregivers, and fewer transportation trips to get to and from the grocery store or to pick up medications.

Virginia's AAAs are vital resources to local communities, older adults, persons with disabilities and their caregivers. I urge you to provide \$700,000 in supplemental funding and support to help us do this essential work.

Sincerely,

Linda Y. Kelleher
Chair, Commission on Aging

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