

****We strongly recommend you talk with your local Area Agency on Aging to discuss the impact of not providing the funding increase. All local communities have unique needs, therefore all AAAs will have differing impacts from not receiving funding.**

Dear **Senator/Representative [Name]**,

I hope this letter finds you well.

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the recent failure to include a critical funding increase for PENNCARE services in the 2024-2025 budget. These services, provided by my local Area Agency on Aging, **[Name of Area Agency on Aging]**, are essential to the well-being of people aged 60 and older, including home-delivered meals, bathing assistance, transportation, and community centers.

The Department of Aging had requested a modest 5% increase of \$15.2 million in the PENNCARE line item to sustain these vital services, often provided through the “OPTIONS” program. Unfortunately, due to the lack of this minimal funding, our AAA will **[insert specific impact of lack of funding, such as service cuts, waitlists, inability to provide a living wage to home care workers, etc.]**.

I urge you to take the following actions:

1. **Ensure budget transparency:** Include the Department of Aging's proposed budget line-item appropriations in the tracking document used by lawmakers during budget negotiations and before voting. This will help ensure public accountability and transparency.
2. **Schedule a budget hearing:** **[If writing to a Senator]** Request that the Senate schedule an annual budget hearing with the Department of Aging to discuss the budget for older adult services. This will allow for a more in-depth discussion and understanding of the needs of our aging population.
3. **Support a supplemental appropriation:** I strongly support a supplemental appropriation this fall, providing \$15.2 million from the Lottery Fund to be added to the PENNCARE line item. This funding will help older Pennsylvanians maintain their independence and quality of life.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I look forward to your support in ensuring that our older adults receive the necessary resources to thrive.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]