

# STATE WIDE

## **New York StateWide Senior Action Council, Inc**

*Improving The Lives of Senior Citizens & Families in NY State*

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### **NEWS ADVISORY**

For Immediate Release

Tuesday, November 17, 2015

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## **Report: Almost 6 in 10 New York Seniors Struggling to Survive**

*Majority of elderly women living in worsening economic situation in New York State,  
data to be released tomorrow*

**WHO:** **Maria Alvarez, Executive Director, NY Statewide Senior Action Council, Inc.**  
Amanda Andere President & CEO Wider Opportunities for Women - [AAndere@wowonline.org](mailto:AAndere@wowonline.org)  
Assemblywoman Dona Lupardo, Chair, Assembly Children and Families Committee  
Assemblyman Marcos Crespo, Chair, Assembly Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force  
Assemblyman Steve Cymbrowitz, Chair, Assembly Aging Committee  
Assemblyman Charles Barron, Chair, Assembly Subcommittee on Community Integration  
Assemblyman Guillermo Linares, Chair, Subcommittee on Outreach/Oversight of Senior Citizen Programs

**WHAT:** Report to be released finds that New York seniors face an array of economic security challenges—rising food, health care and housing costs, long-term care needs, a soft labor market and others. To better capture and understand the challenges faced by New York's seniors, their families, and state and local governments, group has calculated Elder Economic Insecurity Rates (EEIRs)—the proportion of fully retired seniors whose incomes fall short of the Elder Economic Security Standard, a senior-specific basic needs budget.

The statewide EEIR for New York senior households is 58%. More than half of New York households comprised of either one or two retired seniors lack the incomes that would provide economic security and insulate them against poverty as they age. Seniors with incomes below the local Elder Index are likely to make difficult spending choices, to go without one or more basic need, and to have trouble remaining in their homes as they age or their health declines. While insecurity or the threat of insecurity affects elders of all backgrounds, EEIRs vary greatly by location, household type, housing type, race and gender.

**WHEN:** **Wednesday, November 18, 2015 at 2:00 PM**

**WHERE:** **LCA Press Room, Legislative Office Building, Room 130, Albany, NY**

**WHY:** Poverty rates alert us to destitution, and changes in poverty rates suggest change in the economy and indicate how well policy is, or is not, helping the neediest among us. But the federal poverty guidelines are an antiquated, one-size-fits-all measure that tells us little about those living in poverty and nothing about the thousands of New York seniors whose incomes exceed the poverty guidelines but do not allow them to escape the shadow of poverty. Data and research based on the poverty guidelines fail to capture the experiences of seniors who have or are likely to have trouble remaining in their homes as health declines and/or financial resources dwindle.

The Elder Economic Security Standard Index is a measure of the income retired adults require to meet basic monthly expenses and age in place in their communities. The Elder Index defines economic security as monthly or annual income needed to meet these basic expenses without borrowing, relying on gifts from family and friends, or relying on public assistance programs.

Elder Index expenses include housing, food, minimal transportation, health care, and basic household items such as clothing, a telephone and cleaning supplies. Because the Elder Index is a basic budget, it includes no frills or comforts such as recreational travel, restaurant meals, household items or electronics, gifts or entertainment of any kind.