

New York StateWide Senior Action Council, Inc.

ULSTER COUNTY UPDATE

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New York StateWide Senior Action Council

is a grassroots membership organization made up of individuals, senior clubs and organizations from all parts of

New York State. StateWide has been providing outreach and education for senior citizens and their families since 1972. StateWide is the only organization in New York State that is governed by, and advocates for, seniors on a grassroots level. Thanks to the combined efforts of members, StateWide is a powerful, active and respected voice for change. StateWide has advocated for and has succeeded in obtaining:

- ★ Affordable prescription drug program for NYS seniors
- ★ Income protection and programs that keep seniors living independently in their homes
- ★ Expanded In-Home services for the Elderly Program (EISEP)
- ★ Rights, protection for hospital patients
- ★ The Elder Economic Security Standard Index (Elder Index) that provides a realistic view of the income older adults need to make ends meet and remain in their own homes
- ★ Restored budget funding for senior centers through Title XX
- ★ Long-term care needs
- ★ Community services for seniors and persons with disabilities, including affordable housing and transportation
- ★ Consumer protections

Next Chapter Meeting



- Gateway Community Conference Room
- September 28, 2018
- 1:30 to 3:30 PM

Membership News

By joining StateWide, you can have an impact on state and federal issues of importance to older New Yorkers.

- ✓ You can call your Congressional Representatives and tell them to keep Medicare and Social Security strong for now and generations to come.
- ✓ You can keep informed about pending state legislation affecting older residents by using our **STATE BILL TRACKER** which is updated monthly and posted to our web site

www.nysenior.org. If you would like a copy mailed to you call the office at **(518) 436-1006**.

- ✓ You can encourage family, friends and neighbors to join StateWide and you can write

letters to local newspapers informing others about our concerns.

We welcome all members of Senior Citizens groups and Staying In Place groups to attend StateWide meetings and share upcoming presentations such



as guest speakers, documentary films and advocacy efforts with their communities.

Together we can make our concerns known to our representatives in Ulster County, Albany and D.C.

For more information call 800-333-4374 or visit our website at www.nysenior.org

Ulster Chapter Members in Action



Advocacy Corner

In January 2018, Kelly McMullen, a member of the New York StateWide Senior Action Council

and a member of the New York Caring Majority, along with Ilana Berger, organizing director of Hand in Hand: The Domestic Employees Network, testified before the New York State Legislature's 2018 Joint Budget Hearing on Economic Development.

Their testimonies focused on the current and anticipated need of home care services for NY State seniors and the instability of the current personal care work force (Home Health Aides) that is underpaid and therefore is not growing enough to keep up with the present and anticipated demand. Seniors want to remain in their homes but face the prospect of institutional living when the need for home care services outstrips available resources. Private resources are drained and, for many, Medicaid will become the payer of last resort. The burden will fall to tax payers. Investing in competitive wages for a workforce that provide direct care for seniors and people with disabilities, makes good economic sense while creating a profession for many who cannot afford the high and rising higher cost of college education.

"Home care workers can make more money working at McDonalds than they make taking care of our seniors or people with disabilities."

What is a Single Payer system?

A current advocacy issue for StateWide is a single payer system of comprehensive insurance coverage.

Pending state legislation, known as NY Health, would ensure that **ALL** New Yorkers have comprehensive insurance coverage through a single payer system:

- ✓ This legislation will eliminate the financial burden of deductibles and copayments, which serve as a barrier to accessing health care, and will prevent the impoverishment of many senior New York residents.
- ✓ There would be no insurance companies selling insurance. Every New Yorker would have the same comprehensive coverage. There would be no separate Medicaid or Medicare Insurance. Coverage will include dental, vision, hearing and long-term care.
- ✓ Savings would be reinvested in health care service expansion, reducing premiums and eliminating out of pocket costs.
- ✓ Some even predict that savings would reduce local property taxes because of the current obligation to pay a share of Medicaid costs for residents.



Interested in knowing more?

Contact NY StateWide Senior Action Council for our "Frequently Asked Questions on NY Health."

Gail Myers, Deputy Director, NY StateWide Senior Action Council 1-800-333-4374

Interested in Advocacy?

Contact your State Senator's office and urge support for **Senate Bill 4840.**



For more information call 800-333-4374 or visit our website at www.nysenior.org

Ulster Chapter Meetings

Meeting Updates

In January, the Ulster County Chapter held an open Meeting at the Esopus Community Center in Port Ewen. The 50+ attendees watched the documentary **CARE** which addresses the poignant and largely hidden world of in-home elder care and exposes the cracks in the system. Following the showing, a panel addressed the challenges of home care in the Hudson Valley. Panelists included:

- ✓ Kelly McMullen, Moderator
- ✓ Sue Koppenhaver, CEO, Always There Home Care
- ✓ Maureen White, Hamespik Choice Insurance Company
- ✓ Shelley Wagar, Director, Ulster County Office for the Aging
- ✓ Maddy Miller, Family Member, Ulster County Office for the Aging

We thank the Esopus Senior Center for generously allowing the Council to meet in their spacious community room.



Ulster County Executive Mike Hein addresses the Ulster Chapter members

Meeting Updates (cont.)



In April and May, membership only meetings were held with the purpose of developing the Ulster Chapter's Strategic Plan

for the future. In April, those members in attendance were divided into three groups to discuss the Chapter's "Strengths", "Opportunities", and "Aspirations." In May those members in attendance developed measurable outcomes for each of the standing Committees: Marketing, Education & Outreach and Legislative. Members are encouraged to review the minutes of the April and May meetings and sign up to join a committee they would be interested in working with. Please telephone or text Claire O'Brien, Interim Chapter President, at (908) 442-0142 for more information on committee membership. It is imperative that all members participate in the implementation of the Strategic Plan.



Save the Date

StateWide Conference 2018

Dates: October 9th—11th

Location: Saratoga Springs

Holiday Inn

To register, visit www.nysenior.org or call 800-333-4374 for more information.

**Thank
YOU**

President's note:

We thank Martha Steuding, Janet Asiain, NY StateWide Senior Action Council, and the Ulster County Chapter members for volunteering to compose the Chapter Newsletter.
- Claire O'Brien, *President Ulster County Chapter*

For more information call 800-333-4374 or visit our website at www.nysenior.org

Ulster Chapter Protecting our Community

New Local Law Protects Ulster Residents From Discrimination



The Ulster County Human Rights Protection Act of 2018 was adopted in August to assure that residents are empowered to safeguard basic rights and freedoms and the

prevention of unlawful acts of discrimination.

The law prohibits discrimination in employment, public accommodation, housing, and credit based on age, race, gender identity, country of origin, citizenship status, and other protected characteristics.

Under the law, the County established a Human Rights Commission to resolve complaints, reduce

tensions, build consensus and foster harmony between the various diverse communities within Ulster County, and to actively monitor and assist persons with claimed human rights violations through the complaint and resolution process.

The Commission exists to foster mutual respect for the rights of all and to explore opportunities for improving relations among all people of Ulster County.



To find out more information about the **Ulster County Human Rights Commission**, visit their website at:

ulstercountyny.gov/human-rights-commission

or by phone: 845-340-3147

Protect Yourself from Medicare Fraud!



PROTECT: Don't give out your Social Security number, Medicare number or bank account number on the phone. Verify who you are speaking with first.



DETECT: Read your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) and check your health statements, explanation of benefits (EOB) and invoices for unexplained Medical procedures such as:

- Items or services you did not receive
- Charges for medical equipment/services your doctor didn't order
- Dates of service on your MSN are different than the dates the services actually occurred



REPORT: Report any billing discrepancies or concerns you have to **NYS Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP), 800-333-4374**



STATE WIDE

New York StateWide Senior Action Council, Inc
Improving The Lives of Senior Citizens & Families in NY State

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Call your NYS SMP at 800-333-4374. We are here to help!