

# New York StateWide Senior Action Council

# MEMBER UPDATE

Winter 2020



María Alvarez

## CENSUS 2020: ALL HANDS ON DECK!

NY StateWide Senior Action Council has prepared its **NYS Elder Economic Security Charts**.

Combining the 2019 NYS Elder Economic Security Report with other demographic information,

we have developed a snapshot of the economic status of NYS Seniors.

In reviewing our NYS Elder Economic Security Charts it is clear that **this is a crucial time for New Yorkers, especially those aged 65 years and over to be counted in the 2020 Census.**

**Here is why:** Census numbers determine congressional seats and redistribute more than \$675 billion in annual federal funds that support programs such as: services for the elderly, housing, transportation, employment, health care and public policy.

As baby boomers continue to join the ranks of senior citizens, the 65+ population has overrun the number of children in NYS becoming the fastest growing segment in society.

StateWide's analysis shows that among New York State's 65+ population:

- 38.6% Single persons & 24% couples are living in the gap: they are not considered poor, yet they lack resources to make ends meet.
- 15.6% receive SNAP Benefits or Food Stamps.

- 120,000 qualifying NYS older residents leave \$6,000 on the table annually by not enrolling in Medicare Savings Programs.
- Furthermore,
- 33% of seniors 65+ are considered disabled.
  - 8.9% have difficulty in Self Care.
  - 5.6% experience difficulty in Independent Living.

Among New York State's elderly population:

- 377,016 elders spend more than 30% of their household income on rent.
- 403,382 of older home owners spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs.
- 19.3% subsist without reliable access to a sufficient qty. of affordable, nutritious food.

**We need more programs designed & funded to address this situation. The 2020 Census must be filled out by everyone.**

If you would like to see your county's statistics, please go to our website, [www.nysenior.org](http://www.nysenior.org).

### Inside this issue:

ARTICLE	PAGE
Executive Director Letter	1
Guard Against Potential Scams	2
StateWide on the Move	2
State and Federal Budget	3-5
Governor's Proposed Budget	6-9
Membership, In Honor, In Memory	10-11
Save the Date—Convention	12

**Medicare Patient's Rights Helpline 800-333-4374**

# Guard Against Potential Scams

Knowing how the 2020 Census process works will help you spot & report scams.

## AVOIDING SCAMS

The Census Bureau will not send unsolicited emails to request your participation in the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau will never ask for:

- Your Social Security Number
- Your bank account or credit card numbers
- Your citizenship status
- Money or donations



## STAYING SAFE AT HOME

If someone visits your home to collect a response for the 2020 Census, make sure

that they have a valid ID badge with their photograph, a U.S. Department of Commerce seal and an expiration date.

## REPORTING SUSPECTED FRAUD

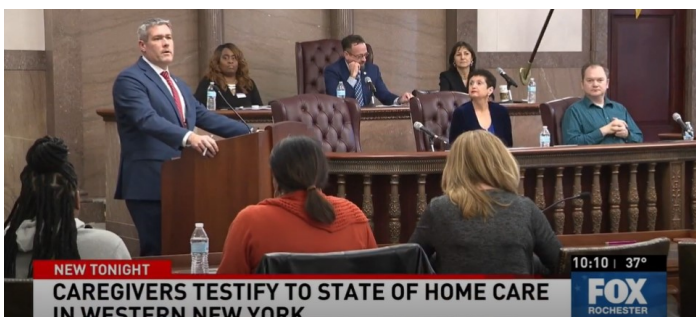
If you suspect fraud, call the Census Bureau at 800-923-8282. If the visitor who came to your door doesn't work for the Census Bureau, contact your local police department. Other questions call your NYS SMP 800-333-4374.



Lowell Green, President of the NYC StateWide Chapter, testifies at the Bronx Senate State Budget Town Hall Forum. Jan 30, 2020



We were joined by the Chairs of the Senate and Assembly Aging Committees: Senator Rachel May and Assemblymember Harry Bronson. Oct 16, 2019



Assemblymember Bronson and María Alvarez, part of the Home Care Commission of Monroe County. Feb 18, 2020



Gail Myers testifies at the NYS Legislature's Hearing on the Aging Budget. Jan 30, 2020

**FEDERAL ISSUES**

The reauthorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA) passed the House with strong bi-partisan support and is awaiting action by the Senate.

- A House memo noted “as the population of Americans age 60 and over has grown, funding for OAA is not keeping pace.
- In 2010, OAA funding was \$42.95 per senior in today’s dollars. Today it is \$27.25 per senior.
- According to the Government Accounting Office, 83% percent of low-income older Americans who experience food insecurity do not receive any meal services through OAA, and two-thirds who struggle with daily activities received limited or no homebased care services.
- As a result, the House bill increases OAA funding, with a 7% increase the first year and 6% proposed annually for subsequent years.

**StateWide is focused on the need to address prescription drug prices.**

- We support efforts to allow Medicare to negotiate prices with drug manufacturers.
- We support Improved Medicare for All, which will address drug prices, cover long term care, hearing, vision and dental services while eliminating out of pocket costs.



We are monitoring the federal budget process, begun with the release of the White House’s budget.



- There are proposed cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, food stamps and heating assistance that are unacceptable.
- The President’s budget is not binding – it presents a platform for his beliefs. Congress has the power to adopt a budget that meets the needs of their constituents.

**One pending bill getting some discussion improves Social Security:**

- Preserving its solvency for an additional 75 years.
- Increasing monthly payments to beneficiaries, and improving the calculation of the cost of living that more accurately reflects the needs of retirees.

**It’s time to express your view on these matters with Congress.**

**UPCOMING TELEPHONE TEACH Ins**

**Mar. 24:** Code Blue Report - NY Hospitals Poor Performance

**Apr. 21:** Empowering NY Consumers in an Era of Hospital Consolidation

**May 19:** Difficult Decisions for Patients & Caregivers About Post Acute Care

**Call in #s:** 425-436-6260; 712-832-8330; **Access code:** 4715203#, **Time:** 10:00 AM





## STATE ISSUES

Governor Cuomo has proposed his budget, and unlike the federal process, the Governor has the upper hand in budget deliberations. The Legislature can only work from his proposals, with negotiations culminating at the end of March. StateWide is weighing in, having had two conference call briefings with our membership and monthly input from our Public Policy Committee.

### We made recommendations on how to lift seniors out of poverty:

- We are seeking improvements to the EPIC program and the Medicare Savings Program.
- We must ask Legislators to restore funding for our Patients Rights Helpline; the Governor's proposed funding falls short by \$100,000.

### StateWide has also stressed the need to invest in Aging services to meet the needs of the state's older population including:

- More funding for home delivered meals, congregate services, transportation and home care (EISEP) services.
- Incentives for recruitment and retention of personal care aides to address the current shortage.

**If you have used our services, referred someone or been helped with Medicare enrollment, now is the time to call your State Assembly member and Senator to voice your support.**

Legislators are sympathetic to the needs, but the overwhelming issue this year is a funding gap in Medicaid services.

### The Governor announced a \$6.1 billion gap between expected state income and spending on programs, mostly attributed to Medicaid.

The increase in costs is no surprise due to:

- Enrollment has grown with the expansion of coverage for people under age 65.
- The increase in long term care costs associated with an aging and disabled population.
- Necessary increases in the minimum wage.
- Provider reimbursement increase awarded by the Governor, and subsequently pulled back, have also contributed to the gap.

**The Governor has NOT proposed cuts to specific Medicaid programs, as he has tried in the past only to be rejected by the Legislature.**

**(Ex: eliminating spousal refusal, limiting access to covered drugs, and changing transportation benefits.)**

Instead, he has appointed a **Medicaid Redesign Team** – a small group of advisers made up almost exclusively of Medicaid provider interests without consumer representation, to recommend changes to save \$2.5 billion in the budget.

## Medicare Redesign Team (continued)

- Additionally, he will place some of the burden on local property taxpayers if Medicaid costs continue to rise.
- The Governor's budget process has given the Legislature little time and opportunity to be partners in solving the budget problems.

Possible challenges are compounded by a self-imposed cap on growth of 3% in Medicaid spending and restraint on overall budget funding that keeps total year to year growth under 2%.

### **Solutions:**

- The Governor and the Legislature could choose to increase revenues and allow spending to meet the need for services.
- Many advocates, including StateWide, are supporting revenue raisers that will fill the budget gap, by closing tax loopholes and increasing taxes on the uber-wealthy, including a tax on private jets, yachts, and multi-million dollar second homes.

### **The Governor has proposed some new programs that are worth considering:**

- The "Restore Mother Nature" bond act would preserve forests, address flooding and fund water improvement projects. If agreed to, it will be on the November ballot.

- A number of gun safety measures to improve background checks.
- Requires businesses to provide sick leave.
- Restricts telemarketing "robo-calls"
- Efforts to end price gouging on prescription drugs as well as products packaged for sale to women that are priced higher than similar products marketed to men (such as razors.)
- Allow Enhanced STAR school taxpayers who failed to register for the Income Verification Program to enroll and receive their STAR benefit.
- Poses some changes to the Physician profiling law and the tax credit for long term care insurance that we will examine.
- He once again proposes to strip public employees of retirement health benefits, which we oppose.



## **BUDGET UPDATE CONFERENCE CALLS**

**Friday, April 17th:** Final budget negotiations impact on programs that support older residents.

**Friday, June 19th:** Federal legislation and budget issues that impact older New Yorkers.

**Call in #s:** 425-436-6260; 712-832-8330;  
**Access code:** 4715203#, **Time:** 10:00 AM

*New fiscal year starts April 1, 2020 Analysis prepared by NY StateWide Senior Action Council*

Program Name	2015-16 Final Budget	2016-17 Final Budget	2017-18 Final Budget	2018-2019 Final Budget	2019-20 Final Budget	2020-21 Governor's Proposed Budget
<b>EISEP</b> Expanded In-home Services for the Elderly	\$50,012,000	50,120,000  Note: \$108,000 more than 2015-16	50,120,000	50,120,000	50,120,000  +\$15m added by Governor to be used for any waiting list  Total: 65,120,000	50,120,000  +\$15m added by Governor to be used for any waiting list  Total: 65,120,000
<b>WIN –</b> Wellness in Nutrition (formerly SNAP)	\$27,326,00	27,483,000  Note: \$157,000 more than 2015-16	27,483,000	27,483,000	27,483,000	28,281,000  An increase of 798,000
<b>CSE</b> (Community Services for the Elderly)	\$27,796,000	28,933,000  Note: \$1,197,000 more than 2015-16	29,808,000  Note: \$875,000 more than 2016-17 added by Legislature	31,183,000  \$2.25 m added by Legislature	31,183,000  28,933,000 baseline +1,500,000 +750,000	32,051,000  29,801,000 baseline + 1,500,000 + 750,000

Program Name	2015-16 Final Budget	2016-17 Final Budget	2017-18 Final Budget	2018-2019 Final Budget	2019-20 Final Budget	2020-2021 Governor's Proposed Budget
<b>HIICAP</b> (Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance)	\$921,000	921,000	1,000,000  Note: \$79,000 more than 2016-17	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
<b>MCCAP</b> (Managed Care Consumer Assistance Program)	\$1,767,000	\$1,767,000	\$1,767,000	1,767,000	1,767,000	1,767,000
<b>StateWide's Patient Rights Helpline</b>	\$63,000	63,000	63,500  Note: \$500 more than 2016-17	131,500  Note: \$100,000 added by Legislature	131,500  Note: \$100,000 added by Legislature	31,500
<b>NORCs</b>  Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities	\$2,027,500	2,377,500  +350,000 more than 2015-16	3,027,500  +650,000 more than 2016-17	4,027,500  Note: \$2m added by Legislature	4,027,500  Note: Budget includes an additional 325,000 for NORC/NNORC health indicators project	4,027,500
<b>NNORCs</b>	\$2,027,500	2,377,500  +350,000 more than 2015-16	3,027,500  +650,000 more than 2016-17	4,027,500  Note: \$2m added by Legislature	4,027,500	4,027,500

**Medicare Patient's Rights Helpline 800-333-4374**

Program Name	2015-16 Final Budget	2016-17 Final Budget	2017-18 Final Budget	2018-2019 Final Budget	2019-20 Final Budget	2020-2021 Governor's Proposed Budget
Senior Transportation	\$1,121,000	1,121,000	1,121,000	1,121,000	1,121,000	1,121,000
Social Model Adult Day Services (SADS)	\$1,072,000	1,072,000	1,072,000	1,072,000	1,072,000	1,072,000
SADS Training Grant	\$122,500	122,500	122,500	122,500	122,500	122,500
Respite	\$656,000	656,000	656,000	656,000	656,000	656,000
Elder Abuse Education & Outreach	\$945,000	945,000	945,000	945,000  Note: \$200,000 added by Legislature	745,000+  Xtra \$ for lifespan 250,000  Xtra 175,000 Center for Elder Law and Justice for the prevention of elder abuse	745,000
Long Term Care Ombudsman	\$1,190,000	1,190,000	1,190,000	1,190,000	1,190,000	1,190,000
Congregate Services Initiative	\$403,000	\$403,000	\$403,000	\$403,000	\$403,000	\$403,000



Program Name	2015-16 Final Budget	2016-17 Final Budget	2017-18 Final Budget	2018-2019 Final Budget	2019-20 Final Budget	2020-2021 Governor's Proposed Budget
Caregiver Resource Centers	\$353,000	353,000	353,000	353,000	353,000	353,000
Association in Aging Training Grant	\$250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
RSVP	\$216,500	216,500	216,500	216,500	216,500	216,500
Foster Grandparents	\$98,000	98,000	98,000	98,000	98,000	98,000
Community Empowerment	\$122,500	122,500	122,500	122,500	122,500	122,500
Elder Abuse Multi-Disciplinary reports of suspected elder abuse or maltreatment		0	NEW  500,000 (added by the Legislature)	500,000	500,000	500,000

## New Individual Members:

DeAnna Ako-Asare	New York
Nina Amit	Ithaca
Maria Arias	Brooklyn
Sheryl Augustine	New Paltz
Elizabeth Bagnardi	Ithaca
Sophia Banks	Buffalo
Pat Barbalich	Colton
Susan Bellor	Massena
Kathleen Betsko	Buffalo
Vanessa Birmingham	Buffalo
Renee Birnbaum	Saratoga Springs
Tom Bryant	Gouverneur
Glenda Bryant	Bronx
Eileen Cassidy	Buffalo
Michael & Donna Clark	Hicksville
Lillian Cohen	Ithaca
Kathleen Collins	New York
Angela Conway	Ithaca
Jerry Cornwell	Ithaca
Sandy Crisco	Germantown
Josy Delaney	Malone
Margaret Dennis	thaca
Suzan Denny	Canton
Bertha Drayton	Buffalo
Bradley Easterlin	Brooklyn
Julia Easterlin	Brooklyn
Cynthia Eaton	Buffalo
Stuart Eber	Bronx
Adela Edwards	Ithaca
Jacqueline Flood	St Albans
Kathleen Gale	Ithaca
Marvin Goodman	Bronx
Nadine Goodwin	Niagara Falls
Diane Guyette	Canton
Kendra Haven	Stone Ridge
Ed Herzberg	East Elmhurst
Mary Huse	Richville
Audrey Iszard	Bronx
Judith Jones	Ithaca
Jean Jordanek	Ithaca
Carolyn Kenyon	Ithaca
Marie Mickell	Buffalo
Joanne Oats	Buffalo
Gillian Pederson-King	Ithaca
Shirley Pinckney	Glen Cove
Richard Poplaski	Ballston Lake
Rose Posia	Buffalo
Desiree Radford	Buffalo
Laurie Rubin	Ithaca
Dee Sarno	Saratoga Springs
Robert Souto	Nesconset
Edward Swayze	Ithaca

Patricia Terrell	Amherst
Barbara Thomas	Saratoga Springs
Florence Thomas	Buffalo
Tracey Twarog	Schenectady
Don & Mary Vanouse	Oswego
Barbara Waldmann	Staten Island
Ruth Walker	Ithaca
Lillie Walton	Buffalo
Gale Washington	Buffalo
Doris Welch	Hackensack
Kevin Wells	Canton
Doris White	Ithaca
Bernice Wiggins	Amherst
Mary Zichettella	Ithaca

## New Lifetime Members:

Maria Alvarez	Astoria
Nan Blackshear	Brooklyn
Janet Burns	Brooklyn
Eileen O'Brien & Jose	
Cardona	West Nyack
Wendy Fieser	Germantown
Joan Geitz	Glenmont
Belinda Hall	Brooklyn
Rosa Jackson	Yonkers
Sarah Johnson	Ithaca
Andrea Mujahid	Buffalo
Benn Nadelman	Ithaca
Rachiel Nieland	Brooklyn
Mark & Cynthia	
Saunders Perry	New York
Ettie Smith	Buffalo
Helen Westmoreland	Buffalo
LuAnn Wright	Bombay

## Kryzak Fund Contributors:

Priscilla Bassett	New York
Susan Beckley	Ithaca
Jeanne Williams Bennett	Ilion
Patricia J. Binzer	Albany
Barbara Boggs	New York
Catherine Bouchard	Flushing
Janice & Sidney Brown	Bronx
Constance Clausen	Fresh Meadows
Paul & Phyllis Cooney	Albany
Margaret & Richard	Corbett Rome
Carolyn Crammer	Clifton Park
Mary Degon	Malone
John Eadie	Rensselaer
Helen Edelstein	Rhinebe
Wendy Fieser	Germantown
Kathleen Fleming	Ballston Lake
Sharon Green	Brooklyn
Marcus Harazin	Delmar

Homer Harshberger	Derby
Frances Helmstadter	Ithaca
Edward Herzberg	East Elmhurst
Laura Jandrew	Massena
Jack Kupferman	New York
Wil Lawrence	Brooktondale
Kathlene Lyman	Alplaus
Ed & Thelma Mager	Salem
Laura Mason	Brooklyn
Betty Evans & Kenneth	
Masters	DeKalb
Jesus Morales	Bronx
Henry & Frances Moss	Bronx
Suzanne Motheral	Ithaca
Sharon Murray-Cohen	Kingston
Benn Nadelman	Ithaca
Claire & Larry O'Brien	Kingston
Leola Phillips	New York
Carol Pittman	Brooklyn
Diane Adele Pomeroy	Spring Valley
Helen Porter	Brooklyn
Oprah Posley	New York
Enid Pottinger	Jamaica
Sigilfredo Roman	Bronx
Lani & Roger Sanjek	New York
Susan Schrader	Ft. Covington
James & Bernadette	
Sherman	Norwood
Kathy Skelly	Heuvelton
Doris Smith	Moravia
Annabelle Staber	Kingston
Dr. Edward & Kim Swire	Clifton Park
Kenneth Traub	Rochester
Linda Wilkinson	Potsdam
Margaret Yelland	Saugerties

## New Organization Members:

Canton Senior Citizens	Canton
Citizen Action	Binghamton
Glen Cove Senior Center	Glen Cove
Mental Health Association of NY	Albany
Riverdale Senior Services	Bronx
Saratoga Family Health NPs	Saratoga Springs
Schoharie County Council of Senior Citizens	Cobleskill





**Yes! I want my experience to count.**

**I want to join NY StateWide Senior Action Council.**

if there is an asterisk on your mailing label your dues are due.

Check box:

- ☐ Individual Membership \$ 20/year  
☐ Couple Membership \$ 25/year  
☐ Lifetime Membership \$ 150/individual  
☐ Lifetime Membership \$ 200/couple  
☐ Organization Membership \$ 75/year

Check box:

- ☐ New Member  
☐ Renewal  
☐ Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_ Affiliated Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

You can contact us at **518-436-1006**. Please make your check payable to: **NY StateWide Senior Action Council**

Send this form to: **NY StateWide Senior Action Council, 275 State Street, Albany, NY 12210**

**All dues and contributions are tax deductible.**

**HONOR  
SOMEONE** 

You may wish to have your contribution to NY StateWide Senior Action Council serve as a gift honoring someone or in memory of someone.

**Contributor:**  
Diane Owens  
**In Memory of:**  
Erma Owens



**Honored: John Eadie, Former Executive Director of NY StateWide Senior Action Council receives national award** (Contributor: María Alvarez)

**Dr. John Eadie**, Coordinator, Public Health & Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, at the National HIDTA Assistance Center, received the 2019 Hal Rogers Beacon of Hope Award for advancements in prescription drug monitoring programs and data collection.



**In Memory of: Sarah Ann King, Former Board Member, NY StateWide Senior Action Council** (Contributor: María Alvarez)

**Sarah King** advocated for senior citizen causes and represented Cayuga County. Sarah volunteered at Meals on Wheels, St. Alphonsus Food Pantry, Sacred Heart Church, the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, and Genesee & Seward Elementary Schools; as well as many other volunteer organizations and fundraising activities.



**In Memory of: Jim Lyttle, Former Director, Sullivan County Office for the Aging** (Contributor: María Alvarez)

Jim served Sullivan County for 25 years with pride and professionalism. He was the Director for 15 years cultivating and improving critical services to seniors and their families. Jim was dedicated to his community in many ways beyond County leadership including participating in StateWide initiatives.

# STATE WIDE

**New York StateWide Senior Action Council, Inc.**  
275 State Street, Albany, NY 12210 • (518) 436-1006 • Fax (518) 436-7642  
[www.nysenior.org](http://www.nysenior.org)

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
ALBANY, NY  
PERMIT #340

Our State Bill Tracker has been recently updated and posted to our website [www.nysenior.org](http://www.nysenior.org)  
If you would like a copy mailed to you, please call our office.



## NY STATEWIDE SENIOR ACTION COUNCIL Annual Convention Oct 13-15, 2020



### Socialize with Friends

Meet seniors from all over NYS to connect with and share information

### Attend Panel Discussions

### Visit the Exhibit Hall

Visit our Exhibit Hall on Oct. 14th  
11:30 AM—12:30 PM