



New York StateWide Senior Action Council, Inc

Improving The Lives of Senior Citizens & Families in NY State

www.nysenior.org • 800-333-4374 • www.nysenior.org

DRAFT STATE
PRIORITIES

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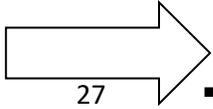
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**Draft 2021 STATE LEGISLATIVE
PRIORITIES**

ECONOMIC SECURITY

StateWide believes that economic security should be defined as having the income, resources, and services and supports necessary to meet all basic needs. The state should use an expanded definition of economic security categories in calculating a livable wage, including housing, health care, transportation, food, miscellaneous essentials, child care, and, when necessary, long term care.

- StateWide urges the state government to use 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) as a closer approximation of economic security rather than 100% of FPL, to shape planning efforts as well as eligibility for service delivery. In so doing, the State will be able to direct services to those with the greatest economic and social need, including older adults with low-incomes, by focusing on those with incomes that fall short of economic security.
- StateWide will fight cuts to food programs, heating/cooling assistance and other important human service programs that provide assistance so that seniors and their families can live with dignity in the community. StateWide supports continuation of funding for the Weatherization Referral and Assistance Program (WRAP) for older New Yorkers to provide coordination of energy efficiency services for older persons.
- Statewide supports the Age friendly banking initiative which will address the banking needs of seniors ranging from physical amenities in bank locations to bank product and services designed to better serve senior, residents with disabilities and low income populations.
- StateWide will work to strengthen action against employers to prevent wage theft.



- 27 ▪ StateWide urges the state to regulate the **digital tele**-communications industry to
28 achieve universal, affordable, high quality and technologically advanced service.
29

- 30 ▪ StateWide urges ensuring a livable wage, future increases in the minimum wage
31 should be indexed to the rate of inflation.
32
- 33 ▪ StateWide supports making the ban on pre-paid funeral insurance permanent.
34 [awaiting executive action 2020]
35

- 36 ▪ StateWide opposes bills to expand the sale of packaged funeral prices that allow
37 for profit corporations to do so.

- 38 ▪ StateWide supports legislation to accelerate growth of entrepreneurial training
39 programs, and make them easier for senior citizens to access.

- 40 ▪ StateWide opposes reductions in the state retiree health insurance benefit to
41 control costs by transferring some of the state's share of costs to retirees.
42
- 43 ▪ StateWide supports requiring a 90 day notice before a locality can change
44 provisions of retirees' health care plans.
45

- 46 ▪ StateWide urges the state and local pension systems to calculate Cost of Living
47 Adjustment (COLA) for pensioners using the CPI-E to more accurately assist
48 retirees with inflationary increases to the products & services that they purchase
49 most.
50

- 51 ▪ StateWide supports guaranteeing public service retirees health care benefits
52 available upon retirement without any diminishing changes
53

- 54 ▪ StateWide supports enhanced efforts to assist residents to enroll in all types of
55 benefits for which they are eligible.
56

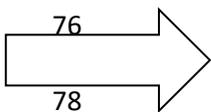
- 57 ▪ StateWide supports a self-sufficiency standard study regarding how much
58 income is needed for a household to adequately meet its basic needs without
59 public or private assistance
60

- 61 ▪ StateWide opposes the use of state funds and a utility ratepayer surcharge to
62 continue the operation of old, unsafe and unprofitable nuclear power plants that
63 have outlived their structural expectancy.

64 ▪ StateWide urges the state to remove liability insurers financial incentive to deny
65 or delay fair payment of legitimate claims, by allowing compensatory damages to
66 be awarded when an insurance company’s inadequate late payment of a
67 settlement exposed the insured to a judgment above the policy limits.
68

69 ○ **Financial Justice**

- 70 • Statewide supports efforts to end predatory lending. We oppose legislation
71 that opens the door to allowing payday lenders.
- 72 • StateWide supports efforts to prevent property foreclosures.
- 73 • StateWide opposes efforts to alter the ban on usurious small-dollar loans.
- 74 • StateWide supports the regulation by the state of credit reporting agencies to
75 ensure that the industry standard protects against hacking and data
76 breaches.



78 • **StateWide supports the agenda of *New Yorkers for Responsible***
79 ***Lending* to promote economic justice as a matter of racial and**
80 **community equity.**

81

82 ○ **Housing**

- 83 • StateWide supports the expansion of affordable housing for the elderly
84 throughout the state, including the establishment of a partnership authority to
85 finance or collaborate in the financing of projects.
- 86 • StateWide encourages the expansion of eligibility criteria for senior citizen
87 rent exemption and tax abatement programs by allowing income offsets that
88 are for non-reimbursed medical and prescription drug costs.
- 89 • StateWide opposes the use of “poor doors” that have been built in residential
90 settings which permits landlords to designate separate entrances for low
91 income residents.
- 92 • StateWide urges investment in supportive housing models that include
93 inclusive design for those who may have physical impairments and often offer
94 a variety of services including activities, transportation, an on-site service
95 coordinator, amenities, meals, and support for residents’ health-related
96 services.
- 97 • StateWide supports a tax credit for either new or retrofitted principal
98 residences which are universally designed to be accessible and adaptable
99 housing.

- 100 • StateWide urges that the heating and shelter allowances given to people who
101 rely on public assistance keep up with increases in rent or heating costs. The
102 shelter allowance hasn't been raised since 2003; the utility allowance has
103 remained the same since 1987. The inadequacies of these allowances is a
104 consistent problem in every part of the state.

- 105 • StateWide urges the funding for grants and investments to New York CDFIs
106 (Community Development Financial Institutions), which serve New Yorkers
107 and small businesses in economically-distressed communities throughout the
108 state. New York's was the first state-based CDFI Fund in the country.

- 109 • StateWide supports permanent funding for the Communities First Program a
110 network of 89 non-profit service providers (59 housing counseling agencies
111 and 30 legal services providers) across NYS that assists homeowners to
112 obtain affordable loan modifications, represents homeowners in state
113 mandated judicial settlement conferences and provides representation to
114 homeowners in state and federal court. In 2018, reverse mortgages were
115 added to foreclosure protections, increasing the scope of the work

- 116 • StateWide supports the Home Stability Support Program that provides rent
117 supplements to those facing eviction or people who might lose their homes
118 due to domestic violence or other hazardous conditions.

- 119 • StateWide supports changes to raise the income eligibility levels on public
120 assistance to create a different income level for housing vouchers to help
121 those who are working from losing their housing benefit as they transition to a
122 higher employment income.

- 123
- 124 ○ **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**
- 125 ***StateWide supports making a permanent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in***
126 ***the state share of SSI in order to decrease the rate of poverty among our state's***
127 ***poorest elderly, blind and disabled residents.***
- 128 • StateWide urges New York State (NYS) to pass through the annual Federal
129 COLA without cutting NYS benefit.

 - 130 • StateWide seeks renewed funding for community-based SSI specialist
131 training, education, outreach, and enrollment assistance.

 - 132 • StateWide advocates increasing the NYS supplement now by 20%.

133
134

135 **HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

136 *The escalation of health care costs and failure of existing legislation to achieve universal*
137 *coverage require continued emphasis on this vital issue. **Widespread health inequality***
138 ***that disproportionately impacts persons of lower income and persons of color***
139 ***needs immediate action [StateWide supports Universal Health Insurance, as the***
140 ***most effective vehicle for achieving universal coverage and cost control.]***

- 141 ▪ StateWide will take the lead to advocate universal health care for all and will urge
142 the passage of the “New York Health” legislation. (New York Health is a single
143 payer for all NY residents that will provide coverage for all ages and improve
144 Medicare by eliminating co-payments, deductibles, premiums and adding
145 coverage for dental, vision, hearing and long-term care.)

- 146 ▪ StateWide supports the re-creation of regional health planning agencies to
147 provide input to the NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH) on trends and needs.

- 148 ▪ StateWide supports increasing the number of consumer representatives on the
149 NYSDOH Public Health and Planning Council. [Awaiting Executive Action]
150

- 151 ▪ StateWide supports legislation requiring all hospitals to have a community
152 advisory board to provide input as hospitals develop their community service
153 plans and provide ongoing advice on community needs and priorities.

- 154 ▪ StateWide will monitor the implementation of the Affordable Care Act to ensure
155 that it is fair and realistic for senior citizens and their families. StateWide supports
156 a strong NYS health care exchange, including enrollment assistance and
157 outreach. Further, we recommend that the state’s exchange offer dental
158 insurance that can be purchased by individuals who are enrolled in Medicare.

- 159 ▪ StateWide will fight state cuts in Medicaid that reduce coverage, due process
160 rights on appeals of denials and grievances, access and quality of care. We
161 support the policy agenda of [Medicaid Matters New York](#).

- 162 ▪ StateWide supports legislation to reduce delays in Medicaid Managed Long Term
163 Care assessments and enrollments. Furthermore, we support efforts to eliminate
164 the potential for loss of coverage for Medicaid and the Medicare Savings
165 Programs due to re-application problems by automatically renewing four
166 categories of applicants: MLTC enrollees, Mainstream Medicaid managed Care
167 members receiving personal care, Medicaid enrollees in the Aged, Blind and
168 Disabled category who do not have a spend-down, and Medicare Savings
169 Program enrollees.

- 170

- 171 ▪ StateWide opposes efforts to change state Medicaid laws that prevent spousal
172 impoveryishment and allow for spousal refusal. Further, StateWide urges New
173 York to raise the income level for spousal impoveryishment protections to the
174 maximum allowed under federal law.

- 175 ▪ StateWide urges New York State to increase the income limits for eligibility in the
176 Medicare Savings Program, using Connecticut as a model, QMB:
177 \$2,120.55/\$2,854.83, SLMB: \$2,321.55/\$3,125.43,
178 ALMB (QI): \$2,472.30/\$3,328.38, rather than the current federal guidelines.

- 179 ▪ StateWide opposes medical malpractice reform efforts that place a cap on an
180 injured patient’s right to be awarded economic compensation for medical errors.

- 181 ▪ StateWide supports the Grieving Families Act, allowing families to be
182 compensated for the profound emotional loss and grief they suffer when a loved
183 one dies at the hands of a wrongdoer, and not base the value of their loss on just
184 their loved one’s lost income.

- 185 ▪ StateWide calls for legislation to increase the Medicaid income eligibility level to
186 133% of the FPL for the aged.

- 187 ▪ Given the increasing number of older New Yorkers, StateWide supports
188 legislation to require training in geriatric medicine, pain management and
189 palliative care for physicians and physician assistants to improve treatment for
190 the specific needs of older adults. Further, StateWide urges that palliative care
191 providers must create an individualized care plan for a patient, and that care plan
192 is to follow the patient regardless of the venue where the care is delivered,
193 including part of the home care plan of care when palliative care is ordered.

- 194 ▪ Statewide will oppose government efforts to raise needed capital for hospitals by
195 allowing for conversion from non-profit status to publicly traded corporation
196 status. **We also seek a moratorium on the sale of long term care facilities to**
197 **for-profit investment groups and to corporations that are LLCs that do not**
198 **disclose owners’ names.**

- 199 ▪ StateWide supports mandating minimum staffing levels in hospital and long term
200 care settings to ensure the safety and care of patients/residents.

- 201 ▪ StateWide supports efforts to stop the practice of sending nursing home
202 residents out of state due to lack of capacity in a region by supporting training to
203 ensure that local providers can meet care needs, especially for those with
204 dementia and other special care needs.



- 205 ▪ StateWide supports the development of a public health system that is better
206 prepared to deal with the effects of natural or manmade disasters, including a
207 registry of seniors and persons with disabilities who may need assistance in an
208 emergency; an improved infrastructure that supports provision of electricity, food,
209 heat, water, and communications; and sufficient numbers of rescue and health
210 personnel.

- 211 ▪ StateWide supports inclusion of data on providers that have been denied
212 Medicare provider status in the NYS physician profiling report law that requires
213 disclosure of education and any findings of malpractice and/or misconduct.

- 214 ▪ StateWide supports greater transparency in healthcare and opposes repeal of
215 the Public Health Law’s requirement for the Department of Health (DOH) to
216 maintain a Physician Profile

- 217 ▪ StateWide supports including pharmacies in the law that requires medical
218 facilities to provide medical records to patients at minimal cost.

- 219 ▪ StateWide advocates that insurers be required to offer coverage of out of
220 network providers.

- 221 ▪ StateWide supports reducing premiums for an enrollee who participates in a
222 qualified wellness program.

- 223 ▪ StateWide supports coverage for individualized customized complex
224 rehabilitation technology.

- 225 ▪ StateWide supports efforts to recruit and retain physicians in underserved and
226 rural communities that face shortages of qualified medical personnel.

- 227 ▪ StateWide supports enhanced funding for Vital Access Providers to prevent
228 closure or reduction in needed hospital services. StateWide supports a
229 supplemental rate adjustment for enhanced safety net hospitals.

- 230 ▪ StateWide encourages New York State governmental agencies to collect patient
231 data on disability status, primary language, housing status, sexual orientation
232 and gender identity to support research needed to prevent health care disparities
233 in service delivery.

- 234 ▪ StateWide advocates for policies that will prevent hospitals from limiting patient
235 visiting hours.

- 236 ▪ StateWide urges all hospitals to adopt policies that conform with the
237 recommendations of the American College of Emergency Physicians that are

238 designed to establish age-friendly emergency rooms that will be better equipped
239 to provide care to aging New Yorkers.

240 ■ StateWide supports regulation requiring that any Medicaid disenrollment notice
241 include a referral to NY Connects so that those needing long term care services
242 can get information and assistance.

243 ■ StateWide supports the implementation of standards of training for personal care
244 attendants and update home health aide training requirements.

245 ■ StateWide supports efforts to address the shortage of home care workers and
246 incentives to train, recruit and retain home care workers. Any solution that only
247 resolves the problem in Medicaid is not a complete solution, since many of the
248 same agencies are providing services to clients who are enrollees in Medicaid or
249 EISEP or Medicare or those who wish to self pay. The problems are inter-related
250 and the solutions need to be as well. We recommend:

- 251
- 252 ○ Incentivize home care workforce training, recruitment and retention.
 - 253 ○ Provide sufficient resources to ensure that mileage reimbursement is
254 adequate for home health aides who must use their own vehicles.
 - 255 ○ Evaluate impact of recent increase in NYS minimum wage on recruitment
256 and retention home health aides, ensure that home care workers receive a
257 livable wage.
 - 258 ○ Address the insufficient hourly wage of home health care aides
 - 259 ○ Provide funds for sign-on bonuses extending over five years, released in
260 annual increments with a balloon bonus at the end of five years; renewal sign
261 on bonuses for additional five-year period
 - 262 ○ Restructure home care delivery systems to enhance more predictable work
263 schedules
 - 264 ○ Create reasonable tire replacement, car maintenance and repairs allowance
265 programs for aides
 - 266 ○ Fund a public image campaign to recruit people to work in the field.
 - 267 ○ Convene a Stakeholder Task Force to brainstorm and make
268 recommendations. Stakeholders appointed must include representatives of
269 public and private sectors, along with representatives of government,
270 consumers, and labor.
 - 271 ○ Create a mentored apprenticeship program with stipend for experienced
272 paraprofessionals who recruit and mentor new hires. This strategy can be an
273 important tool to increase the diversity and cultural competence of the
274 workforce.
 - 275 ○ Provide Retirement security
 - 276 ○ Make sure that workers are paid for all hours worked and that live-in
277 assistance remains an option for those with need for such services.

- 278 ○ Create a funding stream for innovative pilot projects to incentivize the growth
279 of the home care workforce, which would be tested and replicable throughout
280 different areas of New York State.
- 281
- 282 • Fund an Innovation Pathway Center that will promote the adoption of novel
283 products, practices and technology to improve the terms and conditions of work for
284 direct care workers.
- 285
- 286 ▪ StateWide supports incentives for physicians and nurses to develop clinical
287 expertise as geriatricians to improve treatment for the specific needs of older
288 adults. Furthermore, we urge the development of incentives to develop clinical
289 expertise in gerontology for social workers, physical therapists, occupational
290 therapists, speech/language therapists, pharmacists.
- 291 ▪ StateWide urges employment of increased staff in the NYS Dept. of Health to
292 ensure that there are sufficient field investigators and other staff to ensure
293 compliance with quality standards and processing of fines and penalties.
- 294 ▪ StateWide recognizes the challenges faced by people at the end of their lives to
295 receive the care that they want, and when they die, their desire to die with
296 dignity. For terminally ill adults who have the capacity to make medical decisions,
297 the decision to seek aid in dying is a very personal one, and one that can only be
298 made by the person who is dying in consultation with their family, their faith
299 leader and/or their physician. StateWide supports state legislation that would
300 authorize medical aid in dying so that a terminally ill, mentally capable person
301 who has a prognosis of six months or less to live, has the option to request from
302 their doctor a prescription for medication which he or she can choose to self-
303 ingest to end unbearable suffering and to die peacefully.
- 304
- 305 ▪ StateWide opposes weakening the restriction on the 16 consecutive hour
306 maximum that medical residents may work in a hospital shift.
- 307
- 308 ○ **Prescription Drugs**
- 309 • StateWide urges the inclusion of persons with disabilities younger than age
310 65 under Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) so that EPIC
311 works for everyone on Medicare regardless of age and the continued funding
312 of the EPIC program to ensure affordability of prescriptions.
- 313 • StateWide supports coverage for medical marijuana under the state’s EPIC
314 program.

- 315 • StateWide urges policies to support the production of marijuana needed to
316 ensure its availability for medicinal purposes under the 2014 state law known
317 as the Compassionate Care Act.
- 318 • StateWide works to promote and protect New York consumer access to
319 sources of safe, affordable prescription drugs. We support efforts to allow
320 safe prescription drug importation to provide legal access to safe and
321 affordable drugs from abroad. StateWide supports legislation to allow the
322 importation of drugs from Canada.
- 323 • StateWide advocates swift implementation of the NYS bulk purchasing law,
324 intended to lower the cost of prescription drugs for all.
- 325 • StateWide encourages the strengthening of oversight of drug companies'
326 marketing and advertising expenditures. We support regulation and
327 accountability of Pharmaceutical Benefits Managers in New York and urge
328 monitoring of abuses, such as not passing on savings to clients, hiding rebates,
329 and steering market share to certain high cost drugs for particular drug
330 manufacturers.
- 331 • StateWide supports the disclosure of gifts to prescribers from pharmaceutical
332 industry representatives.
- 333 • StateWide supports effort to synchronize multiple prescriptions and
334 standardize dispensing fees.
- 335 • StateWide calls for the investigation of drug price increases, gouging and
336 efforts to prevent coverage for less expensive competitors' products.
- 337 • StateWide urges requiring an increase in type (font) size on printed patient
338 educational material that accompanies dispensed drugs.
- 339 • StateWide supports an enhanced level of informed consent before
340 psychotropic medication can be prescribed for patients residing in nursing
341 homes or adult care facilities.
- 342 • StateWide supports efforts to require drug manufacturers to notify insurance
343 companies and the state, no less than 60 days prior to expected price
344 increases, so they will issue the final notice to consumers and patients no
345 less than 30 days prior to the effective date so the patients can anticipate
346 increased costs.
- 347

348 o Long Term Care

- 349 • StateWide supports strengthening compliance with the Olmstead Supreme
350 Court decision to provide care in the least restrictive settings.
- 351 • StateWide supports mandating minimum staffing levels in nursing homes to
352 ensure the safety and care of residents. We support strengthening training
353 programs and requirements for long term care providers, including training for
354 nurse aides, and requiring nursing homes to maintain staffing levels with
355 trained Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), instead of the more poorly
356 trained and poorly supervised feeding assistants. Further, we urge the state
357 to allow for diversion of people in need of long-term care from facilities that
358 have insufficient staffing.
- 359 • Statewide supports the NYS adoption of a new federal structure for assessing
360 an individual’s need for personal assistance to perform activities of daily living
361 (such as bathing, toileting, dressing, and walking). This assessment protocol,
362 known as Section GG, provides a common language for nursing homes,
363 home health agencies, long-term care hospitals and in-patient rehabilitation
364 units to create a plan of care for individuals who are disabled and/or medically
365 frail. Section GG provides the basis for meaningful discussions between
366 staff, patients and families to assess the current level of independent function
367 and determine the expected future level of function: either a recovery to the
368 past level, maintenance of current function or recognition that function is likely
369 to decline based on the particular medical diagnosis. This structure enables
370 clear expectations across institutional and home-based settings. It provides a
371 means for evaluating the appropriateness of a care plan relative to the
372 individual’s personal goal as well as a structure for appealing for changes in
373 that care plan to the insurance company or institutional care provider.
- 374 • StateWide supports a careful review by the Department of Health of the
375 qualifications and competency of adult home and assisted living facilities
376 which seek further certification to care for vulnerable persons to make sure
377 that those with poor records regarding patient care are excluded.
- 378 • StateWide supports the Adult Care Facility safety and enforcement bill to
379 increase penalties on assisted living programs, adult homes, enriched
380 housing programs, and licensed residences for adults to ensure compliance
381 with important regulations that facilities can now ignore with impunity. It would
382 make per violation per day civil penalties mandatory for violations that
383 endanger or harm residents or violations repeated within a 12-month period.

- 384 • StateWide urges an investment in home and community-based services that
385 prevent premature admission to long term care institutions and provide a safe
386 alternative to institutionalized care.

- 387 • StateWide urges the adoption of policies that promote consumer-directed
388 services. We recognize its importance in maintaining access to community
389 long term supports and services throughout the state. To that end, we support
390 measures that will ensure the continued viability of the program, including
391 efforts to mitigate the funding cuts that currently threaten its future.

- 392 • StateWide will monitor the implementation of Medicaid Managed Long Term
393 Care and will advocate appropriate community-based services to ensure
394 access to and choice of culturally competent providers to meet patients
395 needs. We will urge the inclusion of socially-oriented aging services
396 providers in managed care networks.

- 397 • StateWide supports funding for an external consumer ombuds program
398 (ICAN) for Medicaid beneficiaries enrolled in managed long term care (MLTC)
399 programs. Statewide supports the ability of advocates in the ICAN
400 (Independent Consumer Advocacy Network) program to provide
401 representation for consumers in fair hearings and appeals for consumers in
402 Medicaid Managed Long Term.

- 403 • StateWide supports establishment of a state registry connecting consumers
404 and providers of in-home services to expand care choices.

- 405 • StateWide seeks giving patients increased powers to enforce their right to
406 adequate treatment and care by providing them the right to sue for damages
407 and other relief. Additionally, nursing homes must not escape liability for
408 wrongs just because the patient dies or is unable to initiate a suit on his or her
409 own behalf.

410 **AGING SERVICES**

- 411 ▪ StateWide supports maintaining the NYSOFA as an independent agency which
412 advocates within state government for older New Yorkers. We will review
413 recommendations related to a proposed Office for Community Living, but oppose
414 the merger of aging and disability services through a restructured state agency
415 and will work to ensure that there is a free standing, independent, well-funded,
416 well-staffed and strong agency devoted to aging issues as its single focus.

- 417 ▪ StateWide supports a strong and independent Long Term Care Ombudsman
418 Program that stresses the rights of residents to receive quality care as well as to
419 support those that wish to return to their community homes.

- 420 ▪ StateWide supports continued funding for our Patients Rights Helpline/ Care
421 Advocacy Project.

- 422 ▪ StateWide urges continuation of the line item funding for StateWide’s role in the
423 Managed Care Consumer Assistance Program.

- 424 ▪ StateWide supports the development and implementation of a mobile web based
425 multi-language entitlements and benefits screening system, with personalized
426 assistance to underserved seniors.

- 427 ▪ StateWide understands the need to move towards new technology systems in
428 recording encounter data, but urges that implementation does not create new
429 barriers to accessing services.

- 430 ▪ StateWide urges the permanent restoration of the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2011-
431 12 fifty percent funding reductions to aging services programs funded by the
432 NYSOFA, to ensure the stabilization of important community based human
433 services non-profit sector providers, with future funding growth to prevent fiscal
434 fragility.

- 435 ▪ StateWide supports funding to allow Medicare and Medicaid enrollees, and
436 caregivers to receive unbiased information and counseling that is culturally and
437 linguistically appropriate to ensure informed decision making when choosing
438 health insurance and prescription coverage plans, and recommends increased
439 funding for community-based outreach efforts to reach enrollees each year.

- 440 ▪ StateWide supports expanded funding for services that are non-Medicaid funded
441 but are relied upon by long term care clients under the Balancing Incentives
442 Program, including NYConnects, EISEP, Wellness in Nutrition, Transportation,
443 and Community Services for the Elderly. StateWide urges funding that
444 eliminates waiting lists and addresses unmet need. To appropriately fund
445 services and to increase transparency, we urge area agencies on aging to collect
446 and report unmet need and the NYS Office for Aging to submit an annual report
447 including an analysis of need by county to the Legislature prior to the state
448 budget deliberations being concluded.

- 449 ▪ StateWide supports increased funding for additional Naturally Occurring
450 Retirement Communities and other aging in place/community projects.

- 451 ▪ StateWide urges the restoration of funding in the Office of Children and Family
452 Services (OCFS) for kinship caregiver programs.
453
- 454 ▪ StateWide urges funding to educate seniors and constituents on the existence and
455 type of elder abuse so that more people can become aware of this issue and
456 report instances to the authorities.
- 457 ▪ StateWide proposes that elder abuse cases be reported to the police and
458 prosecuted as a crime, and that banking institutions allow clients to opt for a
459 report of suspected financial abuse be made to adult protective services and law
460 enforcement.
- 461 ▪ StateWide supports requiring a biennial report on the incidence of elder abuse in
462 New York State.
- 463
- 464 ▪ StateWide supports amendments to the penal code to include a new crime of
465 financial exploitation of an elderly or disabled person by a person in a position of
466 trust under the crime of larceny.
467
- 468 ▪ StateWide supports legislation creating a statewide central registry of elder abuse
469 and maltreatment reports and mandates reports by certain persons. Mandatory
470 reporting must provide significant protection for older adults who are not
471 incapacitated and, therefore, should be free to make their own decisions. An Elder
472 Justice Coordinating Council should be established to ensure the needed inter-
473 agency planning and review of elder abuse initiatives that is essential to a New
474 York state plan for the identification, investigation and intervention into cases of
475 elder abuse and mistreatment.
476
- 477 ▪ StateWide supports limitations on conservators' and guardians' overbroad
478 authority over conservatees' and wards' lives. We urge prohibition of petitioning of
479 the courts by long term care facilities for appointment of a guardian to ensure they
480 are paid.
481
- 482 ▪ StateWide urges a mandatory notice to seniors and their designated
483 representatives, if any, when a guardianship application is being made to the
484 courts.
485
- 486 ▪ StateWide supports the expansion of outreach efforts to underserved populations
487 and those with special needs including racial and ethnic minorities, the poor, rural
488 seniors and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT+) community
489 which has an increasing number of older adults.
- 490 ▪ StateWide urges legislation that would give incentives for more professionals to
491 work in the geriatric, mental health, and geriatric social work fields (Ex. partial loan
492 forgiveness).

493

494 ▪ StateWide supports ensuring an ongoing COLA tied to inflation for nonprofit
495 human services agencies to support the recruitment and retention of personnel in
496 certain aging services, including EISEP and CSE.
497

498 ▪ StateWide supports legislation to require source of designation of expertise, title or
499 certification in senior issues be disclosed to clients as a means of preventing elder
500 abuse.
501

502 ▪ StateWide urges the development of a multi-year funding of services population-
503 based formula delivered by local offices for the aging to address the growth in the
504 aging demographic.
505

506 ▪ StateWide opposes the requirement that local governments contribute a
507 percentage match for new state funds for aging services, with maintenance of
508 effort reflecting 2013 local share commitment.
509

510 ▪ StateWide urges education of aging services providers and increased awareness
511 to support inclusion of issues related to older persons who identify as LGBT+.
512

513 ▪ StateWide supports legislation directing county offices for the aging to accept and
514 process supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) and low-income home
515 energy assistance program applications, with adequate funding to do so.
516

517 ▪ StateWide supports funding for aging services providers that contract with state
518 and local governments to meet the increase in the minimum wage and additional
519 increases to accommodate other staff who now earn just above the minimum
520 wage, ensuring funding parity with Medicaid providers.
521

522 ▪ StateWide urges further action to ensure that ride sharing services can meet the
523 needs of persons with disabilities, including making a significant percentage of
524 vehicles to be wheelchair accessible.
525

526 *NOTE: Up to now we have reported on state legislation concerned with*
527 *senior issues. But there are broader issues relating to the needs of all*
528 *ages in our population which we are also vitally concerned about and*
529 *require action on our part:*

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531 **REVENUE**

532 *The Governor’s budget proposals have kept spending at previous year’s levels in*
533 *order to comply with a self-imposed 2% overall expenditure growth cap, that does*
534 *not apply to Education and Medicaid. This is unacceptable as it does not address*
535 *the needs that emerge to reduce poverty and address services for the aging*
536 *demographic. Further adding stress to the tension between taxes and spending,*
537 *state real property tax proposals tie many of the benefits to keeping local taxing*
538 *jurisdictions (property and school taxes) within a spending tax cap. Localities*
539 *may feel compelled to reduce funding for services, including aging services, to*
540 *stay within the spending cap.*

541

542 ***StateWide promotes tax fairness.***

- 543 ▪ StateWide urges the Legislature to adopt higher tax rates for higher earning
544 households with annual incomes above \$250,000.

- 545 ▪ StateWide supports enactment of a property tax “circuit breaker” to reduce taxes
546 on persons with lower incomes.

- 547 ▪ StateWide opposes additional tax breaks for banking institutions.

- 548 ▪ **StateWide supports ending the stock transfer tax rebate and adopting the**
549 **ped- à -terre tax.**

- 550 ▪ **StateWide supports a constitutional amendment to restore the Legislature**
551 **as an equal partner to the Governor in negotiating the state budget.**

- 552 ▪ StateWide urges the closure of corporate tax loopholes.

- 553 ▪ StateWide supports lowering utility taxes on low income residential consumers.

- 554 ▪ StateWide supports making permanent the millionaire’s tax.

- 555 ▪ StateWide supports the legalization of recreational marijuana so that sales are
556 regulated and taxed, and urges that a portion of the state’s revenue from this
557 new source, if enacted, be dedicated to expanding EPIC to cover prescribed
558 medicinal marijuana.

559 **GUN CONTROL**

- 560 • StateWide supports a more rigorous enforcement of background checks of
561 people seeking to purchase guns according to federal law including closing
562 background check loopholes for Internet and gun show sales, expanding the
563 background check database and cracking down on the illegal gun market.

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- StateWide supports banning the plans, production, use and sale of guns made from a 3-D print imager to avoid the registration laws.

568 **ELECTIONS**

569 ***Statewide will advocate for ballot accessibility so that voters are not***
570 ***disenfranchised, including:***

- 571 ▪ Urging appropriate font (type) size.
- 572 ▪ Opposing onerous voter identification laws.
- 573 ▪ Modernizing New York's Antiquated Voting Processes by: [pending action by the
574 Governor:]
 - 575 •enacting automatic registration at a broad range of Government agencies,
 - 576 •allowing all New Yorkers to register and update their registration online,
 - 577 •providing for more flexible voting opportunities that will strengthen democracy.
- 578 ▪ StateWide supports public campaign financing which is modeled on the system
579 used in New York City to provide matching funds for donations raised.
- 580 ▪ StateWide supports enactment of comprehensive campaign finance reform,
581 including lowering contribution limits for candidates and committees, and
582 instituting reasonable limits on transfers to put a check on big money and its
583 ability to influence elections.
- 584 ▪ StateWide supports legislation to automatically enroll citizens on their 18th
585 birthday unless they choose to opt out of the system. [Pending action by the
586 Governor]

587 *NOTE: We also recognize that our planet is facing its most serious threat*
588 *in terms of the effect of climate change. StateWide promotes the spreading*
589 *of information about this crisis, and encourages positive action.*

590 **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

591 ***StateWide supports the efforts of New Yorkers Against Fracking and urges***
592 ***legislators to prevent any further action by the oil and gas industry to frack for***
593 ***natural gas in the Marcellus Shale which resides under large parts of New York***
594 ***State.***

- 595 ▪ StateWide will oppose hydraulic fracturing (fracking)

- 596 ▪ StateWide supports efforts to require NYS Department of Health to provide
597 protection from exposure to radon in natural gas through continuous monitoring.

- 598 ▪ StateWide urges NYS to support research on safety limits and health effects of
599 the radio frequency electromagnetic radiation (EMR) used by the new
600 5G technology in New York State and to require the Department of Health to
601 provide public educational information to clarify misinterpretations and limitations
602 of existing scientific research.

- 603 ▪ StateWide supports mandatory labeling of genetically engineered foods and
604 other consumable products.

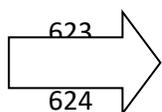
- 605 ▪ StateWide supports funding for testing water supplies and treatment in areas that
606 have been exposed to contaminants or through the degradation of leaded pipes
607 as part of the water delivery system or in public housing facilities to ensure there
608 is no cost to homeowners/residents.

- 609 ▪ StateWide urges New York to be the nation’s leader on energy efficiency
610 including a mandate on energy efficiency savings for individual utilities by buying
611 energy saving programs and products and support the development of
612 renewable distributed energy resources and associated transmission control
613 equipment.

- 614 ▪ StateWide supports improving requirements for carbon pricing options for New
615 York’s wholesale electricity markets to ensure that all greenhouse gases are
616 included, not just carbon; that the plan does not bail out failing nuclear power
617 plants; and that clean, renewable energy and efficiency are prioritized and
618 implemented.

- 619 ▪ StateWide urges additional state support for municipal efforts to promote
620 recycling, including community education about the need to clean recyclable
621 items prior to deposit in an appropriate container.

622 **HUMAN RIGHTS**



- 623 ▪ StateWide supports geriatric parole for certain non-violent prisoners.

- 624 ▪ [StateWide supports planning to ensure a complete count during the 2020
625 Census.]

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628 **EDUCATION**

629 Finally, StateWide recognizes the need for a solid educational program
630 which is vital if our democratic system is to survive. We need a well
631 educated population, therefore we support budgets for local school
632 systems and programs which would improve this system.