

Issues impacting older residents  
in the Proposed Executive  
Budget  
Part 2  
February 11, 2022

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**NY StateWide Senior Action Council**

# Did you miss the briefing on issues in the Aging budget?

- The powerpoint and recording of our January 28<sup>th</sup> briefing can be found on our website.
- [www.nysenior.org](http://www.nysenior.org)
- Correction:
- The new funding in NYSOFA budget to end social isolation is not, as presented, for virtual pet therapy. That program was announced prior to the budget by NYSOFA in a press release.
- The new funding is for a company called **Joy for All Companion Pets** that manufactures robotic animals (cats, dogs, birds) to keep socially isolated elders company.

# Next Steps – Call your legislators to support StateWide’s Patient Rights Helpline

**Make your phone calls right away!**

- PHONE your State Assemblymember
- **518-455-4100** – ask Switchboard operator to connect you to your Assemblymember
- Message: My name is \_\_\_\_\_ & I live in the district.  
**Please restore funding for NY StateWide Senior Action Council’s Patient Rights Helpline by adding \$200,000 to the Governor’s Aging budget**
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**800-333-4374**



# Medicaid



- Good news!  
No proposed cut to Spousal Impoverishment protections



- Bad news!  
Proposed cut to Prescriber Prevails



- Change in calculation of Medicaid Growth Rate  
Just repeal the Medicaid Global Cap

# Advocacy Success!!!!!!!!!!!!

## Ending discrimination in Medicaid eligibility

- Equalize access to Medicaid for all New Yorkers, so that seniors and people with disabilities no longer suffer a penalty that denied them eligibility for Medicaid
- Improved eligibility criteria for senior and disabled New Yorkers who are enrolled in Medicare, raising the income eligibility level and eliminating an asset cap, allowing an additional 200,000 New Yorkers to access Medicaid coverage
- If adopted, effective starting January 1, 2023

Type of Beneficiary	Income Level	Resource Test
<b>In 2022:</b> Medicaid population that does not qualify for Medicare	<b>138% Federal Poverty Level (FPL)</b> \$1563 /month single \$2105 /month couple	NONE
<b>In 2022:</b> Medicaid population that is enrolled in Medicare	<b>87% FPL</b> \$ 934 /month single \$1367 /month couple	<b>\$16,800 single</b> <b>\$24,600 couple</b>
<b>In 2023:</b> No difference, everyone will be treated the same	<b>138% FPL</b>	NONE

# Medicaid Providers

- Repeal of 1% across the board provider rate cut enacted in 2021
- Additional rate increase 1.5%
- Essential Hospitals – need to reform the Indigent Care Pool and include public hospitals like NYC Health & Hospital System in the Distressed Hospital Fund.
- Proposed change to awarding of Medicaid Managed Care company contracts

# Long Term Care Reforms – Health Budget

- Implementing 2021 laws
- **Long Term Care Ombudsman Program Reform Act** \$1.6m
  - an awareness program to promote the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
  - improving communication between ombudsmen and Department of Health on resident concerns and on surveys & complaints
- **Reimagining Long Term Care Task Force** – to examine the state of long-term care, both home-based and facility-based, in the state, and consider potential models for improvement  
\$666,000
- **Nursing Home Infection Control Audits** - a checklist to evaluate infection control competency. 85% criteria met = "in adherence" 60-85% criteria met= review in next annual audit  
\$550,000
- **Minimum 3.5 hours of resident care per day**  
Nursing Home Medicaid funding for compliance with staffing regulations  
\$61,500,000 annually

# Long Term Care Reforms – Health Budget

- \$50m to foster the **Green House** nursing home model
  - facilities are designed to feel like a traditional home, with food made fresh on location, far less visually prominent medical equipment, and minimal administrative interactions — all with the goal of providing high-quality care in a setting that residents find more comfortable and familiar.
- Encouraging the development of more **Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)** - a coordinated community-based long term care service, for those age 55 and older, who require nursing home level of care, but are able to live safely in a community setting.



# Nursing Home Staffing Crisis

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- Proposed: authorize certified medication aides to administer routine and prefilled medications in residential health care facilities.
- The CNAs have enough work to do, are already caring for more residents than is safe, and adding more work to their plate is not a solution to the staffing crisis.
- Further, it takes nurses away from the bedside – and we need more nurses at the bedside.



# Health Care Workforce

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- The Governor pledges to increase the number of health care workers by 20%
- Budget Proposals:
  - expanded healthcare training
  - loan forgiveness programs for doctors and nurses; and
  - one-time cash bonuses for health care workers.
- **There is no proposal to increase wages.**



# Home Care Crisis

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- One-time bonuses create a Benefits Cliff for some low income earners.
- SOLUTION: **Fair Pay for Home Care** is free standing legislation that will be the remedy we are asking the legislature to advance in negotiations



# Housing

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- Governor Hochul’s housing plan will invest \$300 million in the new construction and preservation of senior housing across the state by making significant capital improvements in the buildings and extending affordability to maintain this important supply of housing.
- Local zoning law changes to allow for an Accessory Dwelling Unit



# Environment

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- Extra \$1b in bond issues on ballot this Fall
- Building code changes to achieve greater energy and water efficiency and require zero onsite greenhouse gas emissions at new construction by 2027.
- Eliminating the use of hazardous materials in food packaging.
- Requiring an applicant for gas service to pay the costs to connect to the gas distribution

# Tax Relief

- **1. Middle Income Tax Cut**  
speeding up the phase-in of the middle-income tax cut first launched in 2018.  
From 2025 to 2023  
provide a financial boost to 6.1 million New Yorkers.
- **2. Property Tax Relief**  
A new one-time Homeowner Tax Rebate Credit to low- & middle-income homeowners throughout the state with a one-time rebate on or before October 31, to offset property taxes.  
Basic STAR beneficiaries with incomes below \$250,000  
All Enhanced STAR recipients



# What's Missing

- **Elderly Pharmaceutical Assistance Program (EPIC)** – StateWide has proposed legislation S4603/A5422, to allow Medicare enrollees under age 65 to apply, make the application process easier for all, and increase program transparency.
- Raising **Medicare Savings Program (MSP) income limits** – StateWide has long urged the expansion of income eligibility for MSP to help lift more Medicare enrollees out of poverty by providing assistance with Part B premiums and enrollment in Extra Help with drug coverage.  
A new bill, S8228/A9245, would help 100,000 more New Yorkers, by increasing eligibility to 156% FPL rather than the current limit of 135%. This would make those eligible with incomes up to \$20,093 (\$27,176 for a couple) to qualify, an improvement over current limits of \$17,388 (\$23,520 for a couple.)
- **Fair Pay for Home Care** – S5374/A6329 would ensure home care workers are paid at a rate that is at least 150% of the regional minimum wage. ▀ **New York Health Act** – S5474/A6058 would save the state and local governments money while improving coverage for all New Yorkers through a single payer health care system, removing commercial insurers and putting patients before profits.
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How to pay for it all?

Surplus – more revenue  
received than predicted

Rainy Day Fund





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