

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



CARL E. HEASTIE, SPEAKER
RON KIM, CHAIR

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
COMMITTEE ON AGING



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THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIR
Committee on Aging

COMMITTEES
Education
Corporations, Authorities and Commissions,
Governmental Operations
Housing

December 15, 2021

Honorable Carl E. Heastie
Speaker of the Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Room 932
Albany, New York 12248

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I am pleased to present the 2021 Annual Report of the Assembly Standing Committee on Aging. The work accomplished during the 2021 Legislative Session reflects the commitment of the Committee and myself to protect the health, safety, independence, and quality of life of New York's older adults.

This year, the Committee continued reviewing the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on older adults. On Monday, November 22, the Committee held a hearing in Albany on the impact of the pandemic on programs and support services for older adults and their caregivers. The Committee heard testimony from the State Office for the Aging and older adult advocates on ways to improve the programs and funding levels for older adults in New York State. In addition, the Legislature also passed legislation that would establish a Reimagining Long Term Care Task Force to examine the state of long-term care and the impact of the pandemic on residents and staff (Chapter 758 of the Laws of 2021) and legislation to provide reforms to the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (Chapter 759 of the Laws of 2021).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the committee members for their continued support during this difficult time in our state's history. Finally, Mr. Speaker, thank you for your leadership and support of our legislative initiatives to better protect New York State's older adults.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Kim". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ron Kim
Chair, Committee on Aging

**2021 ANNUAL REPORT
NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGING**

Ron Kim, Chair

Committee Members

Majority

Peter J. Abbate, Jr.
José Rivera
Philip Ramos
Charles Barron
Brian Barnwell
Billy Jones
Inez Dickens
Alfred E. Taylor
Daniel A. Rosenthal
Steve Stern
Mathylde Frontus
Karines Reyes
Catalina Cruz
Simcha Eichenstein
Charles D. Fall
Sarah Clark
Jenifer Rajkumar
Phara Souffrant Forrest
Stefani Zinerman
Zohran K. Mamdani

Minority

Michael Tannousis, *Ranking Member*
Jacob Ashby
Karl Brabenec
Douglas Smith
Joseph P. DeStefano
Melissa Miller
Jeff L. Gallahan
Michael Lawler

Majority Staff

Maria Volpe-McDermott, Assistant Secretary for Program and Policy
Felicia Harris, Legislative Analyst
Benjamin Decker, Associate Counsel
David A. Lee, Committee Clerk
Abigail Mellon, Program and Counsel Executive Secretary

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I. COMMITTEE JURISDICTION

The New York State Assembly Standing Committee on Aging has jurisdiction over legislation affecting the quality of life and independence of New York's older adults. The Committee has legislative and budgetary oversight of the New York State Office for the Aging's programs. The Committee also reviews certain legislation providing property tax relief for older adults.

The Committee works to ensure essential services are available to older adults so they may be able to enjoy a high quality of life as they age in their communities. This includes the following programs: the Community Services for the Elderly (CSE) Program, the Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP), Caregiver Resource Centers, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP), Wellness in Nutrition (WIN) Program, Managed Care Consumer Assistance Program (MCCAP), the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Senior Respite programs, Social Adult Day programs, Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs), Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NNORCs), the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) program, the Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) program, the Foster Grandparent program, the Elder Abuse Education and Outreach program, and locally based Meals-on-Wheels programs. The Committee also has legislative and budgetary oversight of the Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage (EPIC) program, which is administered by the New York State Department of Health.

During the 2021 legislative session, 80 bills were referred to the Assembly Committee on Aging. The following report details the major budgetary and legislative activities and accomplishments of the Assembly Committee on Aging during the 2021 legislative session.

II. STATE BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The 2021-22 enacted state budget provided funding for many programs dedicated to protecting the health, safety, independence, and quality of life of older adults, as well as helping their caregivers, families, friends, and communities.

A. BUDGET SUMMARY CHART

In the 2021-22 Budget, the Legislature provided General Fund support for the following programs:

Program	Total
Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly (EISEP)	\$65,120,000
Community Services for the Elderly (CSE) Program	\$32,051,000
Wellness in Nutrition (WIN) Program	\$28,281,000
Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs)	\$4,027,500
Neighborhood Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NNORCs)	\$4,027,500
Managed Care Consumer Assistance Program (MCCAP)	\$1,767,000
Local Grants for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program	\$1,190,000
Grants for Transportation Operating Expenses for the Elderly	\$1,121,000
Grants for Providers of Social Model Adult Day Services	\$1,072,000
Grants for the Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP)	\$1,000,000
Elderly Abuse and Outreach Program	\$745,000
State Aid Grants to Providers of Respite Services	\$656,000
Lifespan Elder Abuse Prevention Program – Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Teams	\$500,000
Congregate Services Initiative	\$403,000
Caregiver Resource Centers	\$353,000
Association on Aging in New York State	\$250,000
Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)	\$216,500
Older Adults Technology Services Center (OATS)	\$200,000
Matching Federally funded Model Projects and/or Demonstration Grant Programs	\$175,000
New York Foundation for Senior Citizens Home Sharing and Respite Care Program	\$172,000
Livable New York Initiative	\$122,500
New York State Adult Day Services Association, Inc.	\$122,500
Foster Grandparents Program	\$98,000
Home Aides of Central New York, Inc. Senior Respite Program	\$71,000
New York Statewide Senior Action Council, Inc. – Patients’ Rights Hotline and Advocacy Project	\$31,500

III. COMMITTEE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A. Elder Abuse

Elder abuse affects thousands of seniors statewide each year. There are many types of elder abuse, including but not limited to physical, verbal, emotional, and financial. One of the primary hurdles of addressing elder abuse is the lack of awareness and information about its signs and symptoms. One of the Committee on Aging's top priorities is to increase opportunities to identify signs of abuse, increase outreach and education, and empower seniors who are or may become victims of elder abuse in the future.

A.1994, Cruz; Chapter 655 of the Laws of 2021: The law defines "elder abuse and exploitation" in various provisions of elder law and includes identity theft to the definition.

A.7634, Cruz; Chapter 223 of the Laws of 2021: This law authorizes the State Office for the Aging to establish an elder abuse enhanced multidisciplinary team program consisting of professionals to investigate complex cases of elder abuse, including financial exploitation, physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.

B. Long Term Care

A.3922-A, Cruz, Chapter 758 of the Laws of 2021: The law establishes a reimagining long-term care task force comprised of 26 members to examine the state of long-term care services and the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on residents and staff of skilled nursing and other adult-care facilities. The task force is required to report its findings to the Governor and Legislature on the coronavirus pandemic by December 1, 2021, and its findings related to the full study by May 1, 2022.

A.5436-B, Clark, Chapter 759 of the Laws of 2021: The law establishes the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) Reform Act, which requires the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman to develop a program to advertise and promote awareness of the ombudsman program and requires the Commissioner of Health, in consultation with the state long-term care ombudsman, to establish uniform policies and procedures providing ombudsman staff and volunteers certain information.

A.7022, Wallace; Chapter 202 of the Laws of 2021: This law extends the authorization of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program to advocate on behalf of managed Long Term care participants until December 31, 2023.

A.7499, Barnwell; Chapter 296 of the Laws of 2021: This law expands the definition of the social adult day care services program under the elder law to include community or home settings which are pursuant to a person-centered service plan.

IV. HEARINGS

A. The impact of COVID-19 on programs and support services for older adults and their caregivers within the state

November 22, 2021

10:00 a.m.

Albany, NY

On November 22, the Assembly Standing Committee on Aging held a hearing on the impact of COVID-19 on programs and support services for older adults and their caregivers within the state. The Committee oversees a variety of programs for older adults and their caregivers including the Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP), Community Services for the Elderly (CSE) program, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, social adult day programs, caregiver resource centers, the Elder Abuse Education and Outreach Program, Senior Citizen Rent Increase (SCRIE) program, Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs), and locally based meals-on-wheels. The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly impacted New York's older adult population not only from a physical standpoint in that the virus has greatly affected those who are immunocompromised, but mentally, socially, and economically. These programs and services have been vital to keeping older adults healthy and safe in their communities. The hearing sought to examine how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the availability, effectiveness, and efficiency of these programs and services for older adults and their caregivers. Additionally, the Committee also sought testimony to evaluate what may be needed to ensure the effectiveness of these programs in the future.

The committee heard testimony from the Director of the State Office for the Aging, long-term care ombudsmen, aging advocates, and guardianship representatives. Many of the witnesses addressed issues regarding: the lack of staff in facilities, funding for many state-ran programs, and an outstanding unmet need for many counties in the state.

V. OUTLOOK FOR 2022

The Committee on Aging is committed to understanding the long term financial, economic and health impacts the COVID-19 pandemic will have on older adults and will continue to work to secure adequate funding for services and programs that serve older adults and their caregivers, so that they can age safely, independently, and comfortably in their homes and their communities.

VI. APPENDIX A

2021 SUMMARY SHEET

SUMMARY OF ACTION ON ALL BILLS
REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON

 Aging

TOTAL NUMBER OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD 4

ASSEMBLY SENATE TOTAL
BILLS BILLS BILLS

BILLS REPORTED FAVORABLE TO:

Codes	1	0	1
Judiciary	0	0	0
Ways and Means	5	0	5
Rules	1	0	1
Floor	2	0	2
TOTAL	9	0	9

COMMITTEE ACTION

Held For Consideration	0	0	0
Defeated	0	0	0
Enacting Clause Stricken	1	0	1
REMAINING IN COMMITTEE	53	13	66

BILLS REFERENCE CHANGED TO:

TOTAL	0	0	0
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