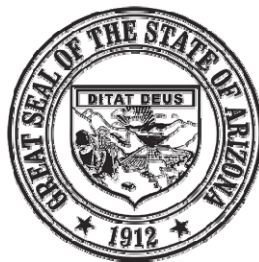


GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING

ANNUAL REPORT
2007



George A. Evanoff, Chairman
December 31, 2007

MISSION

The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging's mission is to enhance the quality of life for older Arizonans. The Council advises policy makers and state agencies, and works with local communities, private enterprises and older adults across Arizona to accomplish its mission.



GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING

George A. Evanoff, Chair *Paul Herrmann, Vice Chair*

December 31, 2007

Dear Governor Napolitano, State Legislators, & Older Arizonans:

On behalf of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging I'm pleased to present you with the Council's 2007 Annual Report.

In 2007, the Council undertook many activities, including restructuring Senior Action Days with the Legislature, taking the effort from a one-day event on the Capitol lawns where the majority of the participating seniors were from Maricopa county, to seven Senior Action Day events across the state. I'm pleased to report that the new approach was very well received by Arizona's seniors, with more than 1,000 older Arizonans and 25 legislators from across the state participating in the Local Senior Action Days.

Additional 2007 activities included establishing Arizona as a national leader on matters for workers age 50+, setting the stage to launch a statewide Caregiver Coalition in 2008, and approving the State Plan on Aging, thereby helping to ensure that our state continues to receive approximately \$20 million in federal funding for services for older Arizonans.

But perhaps we were most proud to stand beside you, Governor, in the September 2007 opening of the Governor's Office on Aging – a step that was long overdue. On behalf of the seniors of Arizona, we applaud your vision and appreciate your support, and that of many Arizona legislators, towards ensuring that Arizona is a good place to grow up in AND a good place to grow old in!

We look forward to continuing our work with each of you in 2008 to ensure that the great people of our state can live with dignity and independence throughout their lives. And we invite all Arizonans to join us at the Governor's Conference on Aging, May 14-16, 2008. We'll see you there!

Sincerely,

George A. Evanoff, 2007 Chair
Governor's Advisory Council on Aging

Governor's Advisory Council on Aging 2007

George A. Evanoff, Chair
Pima County (Tucson)

Paul Herrmann, Vice Chair
Maricopa County (Sun City)

Sharon McKinley, Secretary
Yuma & La Paz Counties (Yuma)

Lynn Adler
Maricopa County
(Phoenix)

Kati Bates
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Eileen Fellner
Maricopa County
(Mesa)

Joyce Finkelstein
Pima County
(Green Valley)

Bernadine Hoffman
Maricopa County
(Scottsdale)

Marilyn Johnson
Mohave County
(Kingman)

Doyle Meredith
Yavapai County
(Prescott)

Ritch Steven
Maricopa County
(Paradise Valley)

Virginia Studer
Cochise County
(Sierra Vista)

Council Responsibilities

The Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging (Council) was enacted into law in 1980 (A.R.S. §§ 46-183 & 46-184), to “advise the Governor, Legislature and all State Departments which the Council deems necessary on all matters and issues relating to aging, including the administration of the State Plan on Aging.” In accordance with the state statute, the Council consists of 15 members appointed by the Governor. The members come from various geographic, cultural, professional, and personal backgrounds relevant to the issues facing older Arizonans.

Arizona has also designated the Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging as its State Advisory Council on Aging, as set forth in the federal Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended (45 CFR §1321.47). In accordance with federal regulations, more than 50 percent of the appointed members must be at least 60 years of age and include: (1) persons with greatest economic or social need, and (2) participants under the Older American Act. In this role as the State Advisory Council, the body advises the federally designated State Unit on Aging (the Division of Aging and Adult Services within the Department of Economic Security) on the development and implementation of the State Plan on Aging, and in the development and operations of policies and programs for older adults.

The Council has four (4) Standing Committees:

- The Executive Committee;
- The Legislative & Policy Coordinating Committee;
- The Mature Workforce Committee; and
- The Social, Health and Alzheimer’s Committee.

The goals of the Council are primarily accomplished through the work of these committees. Ad hoc committees may also be created for special purposes and projects.

The Council’s primary roles and responsibilities include:

- Advocating on behalf of older Arizonans, to ensure policy makers are aware of the needs and preferences of older adults across the state;
- Advising the Governor and the Arizona State Legislature on all budget, legislative, policy and service delivery matters related to the lives of older Arizonans;
- Ensuring receipt and incorporation of public input into the State Plan on Aging;
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Council Responsibilities (cont.)

- Approving and monitoring the administration of the State Plan on Aging, thereby helping to ensure the continued receipt of approximately \$20 million in federal funding for aging services;
- Recommending changes in programs and service delivery approaches to state agencies, based on input from Arizona seniors currently receiving services;
- Presenting information, education, and training to seniors and professionals on various aging-related topics; and
- Providing leadership to the state and its local communities in developing and maintaining a coordinated, best practice approach to aging services delivery and policy development.

2007 Accomplishments

The Council was busy during 2007, including undertaking significant work in preparation to launch several large-scale projects in 2008. Nevertheless, many important accomplishments took place this year. Following are the Council on Aging's highlights for 2007.

1. Established Arizona as a national leader in aging issues.

A goal of the Council has been to raise the visibility of the Council's work and establish Arizona as a national leader in aging. During 2007, the Council achieved this goal when asked by the National Governors Association to serve as the only state technical assistance provider to 8 other states participating in an NGA policy academy about civic engagement and work among seniors. Council staff and project partners were honored to serve in that capacity. Feedback about their knowledge and presentation was very positive. In addition, Council staff made presentations at the largest national aging conference and at several other national business and aging conferences, as well as an international conference of human resource professionals held in Chicago, (at no cost to the State of Arizona). In addition, two of the Council's project partners have received national awards for their exceptional work and efforts on behalf of mature workers. Organizations such as AARP, Civic Ventures, Atlantic Philanthropies, Met Life, Georgetown University and others, have all acknowledged Arizona as the national leader on addressing the changes that a maturing workforce will bring.

2. Hosted seven local Senior Action Day events.

The Council decided to try something new for 2007 to allow more seniors across the state to participate in the legislative process by taking Senior Action Day to the community. Thus, instead of hosting one large event at the Capitol, the Council hosted seven events across the state allowing Arizona seniors to interact with their legislators and Council members, to express their concerns and have input into the state budget and policy making process. Events were held in Avondale, Globe, Mesa, Parker, Paradise Valley, Prescott, and Tucson. More than 1,000 seniors and 25 legislators had lunch together and then spent time in a public forum discussing issues of most importance to older adults in Arizona. The input was recorded and later used by the Council's Legislative and Policy Coordinating Committee to shape the Council's 2008-09 legislative and policy priorities.

2007 Accomplishments (cont.)

3. Increased oversight role in the administration of the state plan on aging.

In 2007, the Council stepped up its statutory mandated oversight of the State Plan on Aging by asking the Department of Economic Security for quarterly updates on the expenditure of the funds appropriated by the legislature in 2006. The Council also sponsored seven public hearings on the new state plan, had considerable input into shaping the state plan, and fully supported the alignment of the state plan on aging with the Governor's Aging 2020 Plan. The state plan was submitted to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services in July 2007, and was approved in August 2007, with a note from the federal agency about the excellent quality of the plan.

4. Supported Governor's establishing the Governor's Office on Aging and Council move to Executive Tower.

In September 2007, the Governor's Office on Aging was officially opened. The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging is proud to be part of the new office in the Executive Tower, and very much supported the Governor's decision.

5. Improved collaboration with state agencies.

While the Council has always had good relationships with the Department of Economic Security, Department of Health Services, AHCCCS, the Attorney General's Office, and the Department of Insurance, the Council deemed it necessary to have input from and the opportunity to communicate with other agencies as well. Thus, this year the Council received commitments from the Department of Veterans' Services, the Department of Transportation, and the Arizona Association of Area Agencies on Aging to provide liaisons to the Council. While the latter is not a state agency, the Council is excited about building a stronger relationship with the Area Agencies and looks forward to input from all new liaisons.

6. Held focus groups regarding Mature Worker Friendly Employer Certification

In preparation to launch the Arizona mature Worker Friendly Employer Certification, the Council held 3 separate focus groups with employers to gather input and feedback regarding the draft approach to the certification process. The Council then reworked their approach in accordance with the employers' input. The certification program will be launched in May 2008.

2007 Accomplishments (cont.)

7. Expanded Legislative Update for seniors.

As planned, the Council provided a weekly Legislative Update during January – June, 2007 to more than 450 subscribers across the state. A free electronic service, the Council takes a non-partisan approach to tracking legislation under consideration by the Arizona State Legislature, and provides information about the timing of federal and state bills, bill hearings, bill content, and how to contact legislators and members of Congress. The goal of the Update is to keep people across the state up to date on legislative and congressional activities and provide the necessary information for them to play an active role in the policy making process. This year the Update was expanded to include an explanation of how a bill becomes a law and the “language” of the legislative process.

8. Promoted the need for funding for home and community based services for seniors.

The Council strongly supports the rights of elders to live with dignity and independence throughout their lives. To do this, we must provide options for people to age in place, support our family caregivers, and protect seniors from abuse and neglect. In 2007, the Council advocated for the additional funding appropriated by the legislature for home care services and for the long term care ombudsman program. The Council was also supportive of establishing the Lifespan Respite Care program, even though it provides services to people under age 60.

9. Conducted research and data analysis to identify methodology to identify older adults who are at risk of falling.

Falls are among the most costly yet preventable health care cost that seniors face. The Council worked with the University of Arizona and the local providers to conduct an analysis of existing data to determine if current functional assessment processes can be used effectively to identify home and community based service customers who may be at risk so that appropriate information and interventions can be offered to prevent falling.

10. Laid groundwork to launch a Statewide Caregiver Coalition

There are more than 550,000 family caregivers providing over \$5 Billion in unpaid long term care in Arizona each year. They are one of the most valuable resources we have to helping seniors age in their own homes and communities. Building on the work of the state’s family caregiver program, the Council has laid the groundwork for the formation of a statewide caregiver coalition – caregivers, professional advocates, and service providers joined in a statewide effort to further the network of support and services for family caregivers, and to raise the voice of family caregivers in the policy making process.

2008 Future Directions

The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging is excited about 2008 and looks forward to working with the Governor, the State Legislature, and citizens of Arizona to enhance the quality of life for older Arizonans and to ensure that Arizona is a great place to grow old in! To that end, the Council will work on the following activities in 2008:

1. Host the Governor's Conference on Aging

The Council hosts the Governor's Conference on Aging in even numbered years. "Myth Busters" is the theme that the Council has chosen for the 14th biennial conference, to be held in May 14-16, 2008 at the Mesa Convention Center in Mesa, AZ. Approximately 600 people are expected to attend to learn more about caregiving, employment for people over age 50, preventing falls, livable communities, and a variety of other topics. Attendees will have the opportunity participate in pre-conference intensives, more than 30 conference workshops, and several interactive displays, plus partake of the information in the Community Resource Zone and receive free health screenings.

2. Access to Dental Care for Seniors

Based on input from the 2007 Senior Action Days, affordable access to dental care is a primary concern for seniors. Thus, the Council has made this issue one of its policy priorities for 2008-09. Throughout 2008, the Council will research and gather information, identify best practices in other states, and develop recommendations for the Governor and Legislature to address this concern.

3. Improve Transit Options for Older Arizonans

Input from more than 1,000 seniors attending the Council's 2007 Senior Action Days identified a lack of transit options as a major factor in inability to remain living independently. Thus, the Council has set improving transition options as one of its legislative and policy priorities for 2008-09. Throughout 2008, the Council will research and gather information, identify best practices in other states, and develop recommendations for the Governor and Legislature to address this concern.

4. Continue Legislative Update

As in the past, the Council will continue providing free Legislative Updates, with information about bills being considered by the Legislature along with how to contact policy makers and make one's voice heard. This year the Council will seek to use more sophisticated list serve software, in order to be as efficient as possible.

2008 Future Directions (cont.)

5. Promote Credit Freeze Legislation

In 2007, thirty-six states had implemented legislation to allow residents to put a freeze on their credit reports, helping to protect from identity theft. With Arizona having the highest rate of identity theft in the nation, and our elders being particularly vulnerable to such scams, the Council is committed to supporting and promoting legislation that provides affordable options to Arizona residents to put a “freeze” on their credit reports.

6. Open the Mature Worker Job Bank & Resource Portal

Operating in partnership with Jobing.com, the Council will launch the Mature Worker Job Bank and Resource Portal website for mature workers and employers seeking to connect with each other to address the changes brought about by an aging workforce.

7. Launch the Mature Worker Friendly Employer Certification

As part of the Arizona Mature Workforce Initiative, the Council, in partnership with the Governor’s Office on Aging, the Department of Economic Security and the Department of Commerce, will launch a Mature Worker Friendly Employer Certification in May 2008, with the first awards going out in the fall of 2008.

8. Create and launch a new webpage for the Council

The Council will establish a new webpage on Governor Napolitano’s website. The new site will have information about the Council’s members, committees, and activities, as well as posting meeting information, agendas, and minutes and linking to key resources for older Arizonans. The current webpage on the DES site will be closed and visitors will be redirected to the new website at www.azgovernor.gov/gaca .

9. Partner in the Opening of the Workforce Transition Center

In partnership with GateWay Community College, the Council will support the opening of the Workforce Transition Center – a service targeted to Boomers interested in making mid-career transitions, changing professions, or returning the workforce – this Center will provide talent and skills assessments, and help transitioners obtain the skills they need to make their desired transition. Supported by the Council but funded through a grant from the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust, this effort will be a great example of a public-private partnership.

2008 Future Directions (cont.)

10. Support a Call to Action Event for Family Caregivers

In March 2008, the Council will support a Call to Action Rally for family caregivers on the Capitol lawns. Designed to bring family caregivers together to share their concerns and raise their voice in the public policy arena, this event will be a significant step towards launching the Statewide Caregiver Coalition.

11. Launch a Statewide Caregiver Coalition

In 2008, the Council will officially launch the Statewide Caregiver Coalition - caregivers, professional advocates, and service providers joined in a statewide effort to further the network of support and services for family caregivers, and to raise the voice of family caregivers in the policy making process. The first meeting of the coalition is planned for May 2008 at the Governor's Conference on Aging.

12. Continue Advising the Governor and Legislature on Aging Issues

In accordance with the purpose of the Council, the Council will continue to provide recommendations and advice to the Governor and Legislature on the needs and interests of older Arizonans. From budget priorities to elders' perspective on any type of legislation, policy makers can benefit from utilizing the Council as a source of non-partisan input on matters that affect seniors.

Conclusion

Through the work of its very dedicated members and hundreds of community partners, the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging has had many accomplishments in 2007. As the Council enters its 27th year, we are excited about where we have been and where we are going. It is indeed a great time to be a senior in Arizona, and we look forward to working with you for continued success in 2008.

As always, if we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our office at:

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