



## Facts About the Connecticut Commission on Aging

**Did you know?**

CT is the 7<sup>th</sup> oldest state in the nation and our population of 65+ is projected to grow by 64% by 2030!

***Our mission is to serve as an objective, credible source of information on issues affecting Connecticut's older adults, to prepare our state for the needs of its soaring older adult population and to provide accountability within state government.***

**Who we are:** Created in 1993, and moved to the Legislative Branch in 2005, the Connecticut Commission on Aging (CGS §17b-420) is an independent agency located at the State Capitol. **CoA's work is not duplicated within either present or proposed offices of the Executive or Legislative branches of government or outside of government.**

**What we do:**

- **Lead public/private-sector efforts** to promote public policy reflecting best practices and national trends on multi-faceted aging issues including: health care, long-term care, transportation, financial security, housing, employment, and many others;
- **Present solutions and savings**, including finding 11 million dollars of untapped new federal funds (on May 26<sup>th</sup> '09), and in general recommendations that can save the state \$600 million annually;
- **Review and comment on state budgets**, policies and procedures that affect older adults, providing accountability and an independent voice;
- **Analyze demographic, economic and service delivery trends** in aging, delivering objective research and generating reports to guide sound public policy;
- **Develop legislative proposals** and testify before the Connecticut General Assembly;
- **Empower people**, working with state partners to create, maintain, and promote CT's Long-Term Care Website ([www.ct.gov/longtermcare](http://www.ct.gov/longtermcare));
- **Reach out statewide to thousands of Connecticut residents**, including holding Town Hall meetings, hosting public informational forums and exchanges, and serving as an objective resource to policymakers;
- **Bridge the generations**, by linking school districts across our state with Earth's Elders, a unique (and free) school curriculum that connects students with older adults in their communities;

**CT Commission on Aging Team**

**Voting (unpaid) citizen members:**

Christine M. Lewis, Chair  
 Waldo C. Klein, PhD, MSW  
 Don Dimenstein  
 William L. Eddy  
 Mary Ellen Klinck  
 Sharon Gesek  
 Raymond A. Guenter  
 Nancy Sullivan Hodkoski  
 Judith M. Jencks  
 Gerard J. Kerins, MD  
 Patricia Mayfield  
 Richard C. Memmott, Sr.  
 Carol Tillman Parrish  
 James L. Pellegrino  
 Carolyn J. Thornberry, PhD  
 Penelope L. Young  
 Gerd Weindling

**Non-Voting Members**

8 nonvoting Executive Branch agency representatives +  
 8 nonvoting Legislators

**Staff**

4 staff

**Recent Successes (a sample):**

- CoA provided background research, testimony and led collaborative efforts both within state government and in communities across the state to ensure that the **Money Follows the Person** program was passed into law, reflects Best Practices and launched;

**For more information, please contact the Connecticut Commission on Aging, at 860-240-5200.**

## CT Commission on Aging Fact Sheet

- CoA, recognizing the need for additional transportation options for older adults, helped advance legislation and start-up funding to create a new community-based, self-sustaining system of transportation called **Independent Transportation Networks (ITNs)**;
- CoA provided testimony and critical information to legislators to ensure the passage of the **Medicaid hospice option** (with minutes to go in the 2008 session);
- CoA led efforts to mandate and fund the state's first comprehensive **Long-Term Care Needs Assessment** - a roadmap to planning for the future needs in our state - and leads promotion of the recommendations;
- CoA co-chairs, leads, and manages the legislatively-mandated **Long-Term Care Advisory Council**, a diverse group of advocates, providers, and consumers (older adults and persons with disabilities) providing a collective voice and direction to long-term care issues in the state;
- CoA created, chairs and manages the **CT Elder Action Network**, a dynamic group of advocates and providers of services for older adults;
- CoA, utilizing its extensive and diverse network of relationships, looks at "big picture issues" and works across state agencies and branches of government to help Connecticut progress towards **major long-term care systems change**;
- CoA, working with school districts, the State Department of Education, and after-school providers across the state, has partnered with the **Earth's Elders** Foundation in Kent, CT to promote an intergenerational school curriculum;
- CoA conducted several studies (without any additional funding) on **emerging workforce issues** and **property tax relief** programs;
- CoA improves access to information for older adults, persons with disabilities, families and caregivers: we have supported funding for **CHOICES**, legislation to create statewide Single Point of Entry and, working with OPM, we created and maintain the state's **Long-Term Care web site**. The web site received over 80,000 visits last year alone; and,
- CoA helped pass legislation that mandated that residents in Connecticut have the right to receive long-term care services and supports in the **least-restrictive environment**.

### From a budget perspective

- CoA fills a nonpartisan leadership role within the state, including serving in an advisory capacity to the CT General Assembly and the Governor.
- CoA's 17 unpaid, volunteer voting members come from communities throughout the state.
- The extremely modest budget (.0025% of the state budget) - of \$414,500 (representing a 20% budget reduction as proposed by the Legislature's Appropriations Committee in early April '09) - for its state Capitol-based four-person staff delivers a sound and wise investment in Connecticut's future.
- Any objective assessment of the CoA's performance reveals that it is a low-cost, highly efficient and effective independent agency. This will be further illustrated by the Results-Based Accountability work the CoA is performing with the Legislature's Appropriations Committee.
- Our oversight directly relates to the largest component of the state budget – Medicaid (representing 14% of the overall state budget).

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