

August 23, 2004

TO: Members of S&DS' Advisory Councils

FROM: Advocacy Committee

SUBJECT: S&DS Legislative Priorities for 2005

Background:

One of S&DS' responsibilities as the Area Agency on Aging and Disability Services for Lane County is to serve as an advocate for those we serve. To this end, S&DS, with the help of the members of its Senior Services and Disability Services Advisory Councils, strives to develop and maintain positive relationships with the elected officials who represent Lane County in the State Legislature. It also endeavors to inform and educate members of the State Legislatures about the needs and concerns of seniors and people with disabilities who reside in this county. To facilitate this work, every even-numbered year S&DS develops a set of priorities for the upcoming legislative session which convenes in January of the odd-numbered year. With the general election three months away, it is time that the identification of the organization's priorities for the 2005 Session of the Legislature be completed.

The Councils' Advocacy Committee, at its July meeting, developed a set of proposed legislative priorities for the 2005 Session. They were endorsed by the Senior Services Advisory Council at its August meeting, and will be considered by the Disability Services Advisory Council at its September 10th meeting.

Following DSAC endorsement, they will be presented to the LCOG Board of Directors for consideration and approval at its September 30th meeting. Once approved by the LCOG Board, S&DS Advisory Council members and staff will have the authority to promote them with candidates, elected officials, and other interested persons.

Proposed S&DS Priorities for the 2005 Legislative Session (not listed in order of priority):

- Restore funding for needed long term care services (Medicaid Levels 14-17, and full restoration of biennial appropriation for Oregon Project Independence).
- Restore funds for health care (OHP Standard) and prescription drugs (Medically Needy Program).
- Adequately staff Adult Protective Services (APS).
- Expand funding for special transportation services.
- Create an ombudsman for users of managed health care services.
- Keep the promise – fund “equity” for Area Agencies on Aging and Disability Services.
- Revise one-sided DHS contracts with local governments for the provision of human services.
- Adequately fund counties’ services to assist military veterans obtain federal veterans benefits.

Brief explanations of these priorities are attached.

Attachments

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