

ADVOCACY ALERT

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

Thursday, April 23, 2009

**Contact Ohio Legislators to Urge Them to Restore
\$1,279,820 in Senior Community Services Block Grant Funds
(GRF Line Item 490 411)
In the Budget to Receive \$4.4 Million in Federal Funds**

ISSUE DESCRIPTION AND ACTION

On Tuesday, April 21, the Finance Committee of the Ohio House of Representatives released Substitute House Bill 1 (Sub. HB 1), its version of the budget for FY 2010-2011. The budget does not sufficiently fund the General Revenue Fund (GRF) Line Item 490 411, the Senior Community Services (SCS) Block Grant. SCS provides services such as home delivered meals, transportation, and home care services to help lower income older adults maintain their independence and remain in their homes and communities. A mix of state and federal dollars funds SCS. The Older Americans Act (OAA) demands that states not decrease the money they spend for SCS if they expect to receive matching federal dollars. The term for a state maintaining its level of funding for SCS to receive federal dollars is Maintenance of Effort (MOE). The current economic downturn has resulted in less revenue to fund Ohio's SCS line item (GRF Line Item 490 411). Based on the current budget allocation, Ohio will be unable to comply with federal MOE requirements, potentially **losing \$4.4 million in federal OAA funds** over the biennium.

We must ask our Ohio legislators to restore sufficient funds to the General Revenue Fund (GRF) Line Item 490 411, the Senior Community Services Block Grant (SCSBG), in the 2010-2011 biennial budget so that Ohio can comply with the OAA MOE requirement. The increase needed to meet the MOE for OAA dollars is \$639,910 annually or \$1,279,820 for the biennium. If Ohio **loses \$4.4 million in federal OAA funds** over the biennium, up to 5,300 consumers who use these services will suffer. **The cumulative effect of all lost state and federal dollars in SCS is nearly \$7 million over the biennium.**

Federal stimulus dollars that Ohio receives through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) cannot be used to meet MOE requirements and do not fund the services that will be lost. Stimulus dollars fund new nutrition services, not existing home and community based services.

IMMEDIATE ACTION NEEDED

1. Call, e-mail or write to your Ohio legislators today. Let them know that without an increase of \$1,279,820 for the biennium for Senior Community Services Block Grant Funds (GRF Line Item 490 411) in the FY 2010-2011 budget, Ohio could **lose \$4.4 million in federal OAA funds**. These dollars fund services such as home delivered meals, transportation, and home care services to help lower income older adults maintain their independence and remain in their homes and communities.
2. Spread the word. Ask your colleagues and friends to contact their legislators with this important message.
3. Please inform us of any response you receive from a legislator or legislative aide to your telephone call, e-mail, or letter. We are eager to learn what you discover from your contacts.

HERE IS OUR MESSAGE

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Dear (Official's Title and Name):

It is imperative that Ohio's legislators find the means to fund an increase of **\$1,279,820 in the GRF Line Item 490 411, the Senior Community Services Block Grant**, in the 2010-2011 biennial budget so that Ohio can comply with the Older Americans Act (OAA) Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirement. This is necessary to provide our lower income older adults the services they need to remain in their homes and communities.

Without an increase of \$1,279,820 for the biennium for Senior Community Services Block Grant Funds (GRF Line Item 490 411) in the FY 2010-2011 budget, Ohio could **lose \$4.4 million in federal OAA funds. The cumulative effect of all lost state and federal dollars in SCS is nearly \$7 million over the biennium.**

The Senior Community Services Block Grant dollars fund services such as home delivered meals, transportation, and home care services to help lower income older adults maintain their independence and remain in their homes and communities. If Ohio loses \$4.4 million in federal OAA funds over the biennium, up to 5,300 consumers who use these services will suffer.

Yours truly,
(Your name and contact information)

Contact Information for Legislators

To send a letter or e-mail to your Ohio legislator, you can find contact information at www/ohioaging.org

At the www/ohioaging.org website, choose WEB LINKS from the menu options across the top of the website, choose Ohio Links from the drop down menu, and choose House

of Representatives or Senate, then choose your legislator from the alphabetical listing. If you have had contact with any of the lawmakers' Legislative Aides, contacting them with our message could be helpful.

Thank you for your advocacy.

www.ohioaging.org