



JEFFREY DINOWITZ
Assemblyman 81ST District
Bronx County

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIRMAN
Committee on Aging

COMMITTEES
Election Law
Health
Judiciary

MEMBER
Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force

November 3, 2008

Dear Friend:

Attached is a letter to Governor Paterson requesting that senior services be protected from further spending reductions in the 2008-2009 fiscal year and additional reductions in the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

This letter was supported by 16 of my Assembly colleagues and was hand-delivered to Governor Paterson's office on November 3, 2008. Please be assured that all of my Assembly colleagues will dedicate our energy to preserving essential services for seniors throughout New York State during this difficult financial time.

Should you have any questions on this matter, please feel free to contact my Legislative Office at (518) 455-5965.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Dinowitz
Chairman, Committee
On Aging



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November 3, 2008
(Revised)

Hon. David Paterson, Governor
New York State
Executive Chamber
State Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Paterson:

At this extraordinarily difficult moment in New York State, we in government are being faced with unprecedented challenges. Financial instability, growing debt, rising unemployment, increasing home foreclosures, and public anxiety are some of the few factors contributing to our situation.

We are writing to you as concerned representatives of our constituents and of senior citizens across New York State. Programs for senior citizens are under siege. Many essential programs like the Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly (EISEP) program, the Community Services for the Elderly (CSE), and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) have been subjected to millions of dollars in cuts so far this year.

We are writing to inform you of what the real cost of further reductions in these programs will be. Additional reductions in programming dollars will cause small providers across the state to potentially consolidate and/or close. In concentrated areas like New York City, seniors receiving these services could possibly receive services elsewhere at a great expense of time and energy to them and their families. In more rural parts of upstate New York, with increasingly high concentration of senior citizens, the closing of one provider due to budget cuts may be the elimination of the only program available. If history is any guide, when these providers close down, they do not open again, permanently eliminating services in parts of our State.

In addition, New York State is getting older. With the impending retirement of New York's baby boomers, by 2015, New York State will be home to 3.7 million people over the age of 60; by 2025, it is projected that New York will have 4.4 million residents over the age of 60.

These demographic projections indicate that there is a need to build a solid service infrastructure for senior citizens that will desperately need it in the future. Additional cuts to existing programs at this time will do nothing for the long term solvency of senior programming.

In recent years, New York State has instituted many cost-saving, in home and community based care options for seniors including adult day programs, Alzheimer's Assistance programs,

Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) services expansions, and mature worker training programs. These programs will keep people in their homes and in the community for a longer period of time and reduce costs by delaying institutionalization.

We urge you not to take any actions that will set back the progress that has been made in this area. We say this fully understanding the fiscal situation that we are in. However, when it comes to senior services, it is essential to spend money now because it will save money in the future.

Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Dinowitz, Chair
Assembly Aging Committee

Assemblywoman Joan Millman
Assemblyman Jack McEneny
Assemblyman Bob Sweeney
Assemblyman Cliff Crouch
Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton
Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther
Assemblyman William Magee
Assemblyman George Amedore
Assemblywoman Joan Christensen
Assemblyman Rory Lancman
Assemblywoman D. Janele Hyer-Spencer
Assemblyman Jonathan Bing
Assemblyman Michael Benjamin
Assemblywoman Amy Paulin
Assemblywoman RoAnn Destito
Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel