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Vermont Area Agencies on Aging (V4A) 2019 Public Hearing Presentation – Age Well

Issue: All Vermonters need the same things: food, shelter, community and the ability to get care. When we have adequate systems of support for older Vermonters, we will improve the lives of all Vermonters.

Most Vermonters want to be able to stay in their homes as they get older. When Vermonters can age in a setting of their choice, we see better health outcomes, stronger communities, and significant savings compared to nursing home care. Our success as a state will depend on ensuring older Vermonters can choose where they live and receive care.

As a member of The Vermont Association of the Area Agencies on Aging (V4A), we are working to help more Vermonters happily and comfortably age in place.

We ask the legislature to help Vermonters choose where and how they live by considering and supporting the following key initiatives:

Choices for Care:

- Cover home delivered meals
- Provide reasonable annual rate increases for home and community based providers on par with nursing homes
- Increase flexible funds that allow older Vermonters to decide what services and supports they need to live in the setting of their choice
- Allow Vermonters to remain with the case management agency of their choice regardless of where their Moderate Needs funds are administered
- Improve the moderate needs waitlist procedures and priorities to provide access to services based on need rather than the date of application to the program

Meals on Wheels:

Meals on Wheels is an essential program that provides over 1,000,000 nutritious meals to over 15,000 thousand Vermonters. With adequate funding the program can ensure that older Vermonters remain at home and receive a nutritious meal, safety check and the social connection.



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Caregiver Support: Vermonters have the time and resources to care for their family
In 2018, the Vermont legislature passed legislation that would grant Vermonters access to paid job protected leave for care for a family member with a serious long-term illness or injury, or to take time to bond with or care for a new child. This is especially important as more and more older Vermonters are relying on family caregivers to help them remain in their homes and communities.

FY 2020 V4A Budget Requests:

- a. First, we ask the legislature for a 15% increase in the Area Agencies on Aging base general fund appropriation to increase reimbursements to meal providers across the state. (Approx \$650k general fund)
- b. Second, we ask the legislature to cover the cost of home delivered meals for Choices for Care participants as described in H.187. (Approx \$200k - \$300k general fund)
- c. Finally, we ask the legislature to increase rates for home and community based long term care providers with a guaranteed annual increase as described in H.189.

Thank you for your support of all Vermonters!

Jane Catton
CEO