

King County Aging Network

2018 State Legislative Priorities

Protect and Strengthen Our Communities for the Future

Our state and region thrive when people of all ages actively participate in their communities, have equitable access to opportunities and everyone is treated with respect, regardless of their age or ability.

We need your help to ensure that communities in our state are “age-friendly”—places that enable people of all ages and abilities to achieve their potential.

You can help by supporting:

- 1 Affordable and accessible housing and transportation options.**
- 2 Meaningful opportunities for employment, a safe and secure retirement system, and affordable healthcare for all life stages.**
- 3 A strong system of community-based supports for family caregivers, older adults, and people with disabilities, including dementia and Alzheimer’s disease.**
- 4 Safeguards to prevent the abuse of our most vulnerable citizens and strengthening systems that respond to incidents of abuse.**

Washington is a leader on many of these issues, including the quality of our long-term care system—ranked 1st in the nation for quality and cost effectiveness. However, critical maintenance was neglected during the recession, and **revenue is needed** to ensure that the system can effectively respond to our state’s growing older population.

You can help by supporting ongoing efforts to strengthen and sustain this system, including: 1) the **Joint Legislative Committee on Aging**, and 2) **Accountable Communities of Health** will enable local innovations to transform our state’s health care system.

On the next page, we have listed opportunities for the Washington State Legislature to strengthen the Aging Network in 2018. These priorities were developed in collaboration with the Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging and the Senior Lobby.

If you have questions or would like information specific to your legislative district, contact ADS Advisory Council staff liaison Gigi Meinig at 206-684-0652 or Gigi.Meinig@seattle.gov.



King County Advisory Council on Aging & Disability Services
www.agingkingcounty.org

What you can do

To Strengthen Washington State's Aging Network

 <p>Housing</p>	<p>Preserve and increase affordable, accessible housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invest in the Housing Trust Fund, critical to increase the supply of affordable housing for seniors, people with disabilities, veterans, and low-income families.• Create legislation that enables more older adults to qualify for and maximize benefits of the Senior Property Tax Exemption.• Ban Discrimination Based on a Renter's Source of Income - SB 5407 / HB 1633 would protect seniors who receive income from Social Security, Veterans Benefits, or housing assistance programs.
 <p>Community-based Supports</p>	<p>Strengthen long-term care services and supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ranked by AARP as #1 in the country, Washington State's Medicaid long term care system has saved the state \$3+ billion over 15 years by enabling people to receive care in the lowest cost setting – their homes. Ongoing support for Case Management is needed to ensure program quality and safety, as well as the viability of successful models such as Health Home care coordination.• Support the Long-Term Care (LTC) Trust Act (HB 1636), which will provide an accessible and affordable long-term care system through a public benefit trust payroll deduction. 90% of adults have no LTC insurance as plans are too expensive, and neither health insurance or Medicare cover long term care.
 <p>Vulnerable Adults</p>	<p>Create capacity for the Dementia Action Collaborative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our state's Dementia Action Plan is a blueprint for promoting healthy aging and brain health; improving the quality of life for those living with dementia; easing the strain on family caregivers; and reducing associated costs of caring for people with dementia and Alzheimer's Disease.• Investment in the Dementia Action Collaborative will enable our state to implement these strategies.
 <p>Affordable Health Care</p>	<p>Ensure Medicaid coverage for hearing and vision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sensory loss is associated with poor health status and cognitive decline. Investments in hearing and vision will result in overall health improvements and long-term care savings• SB 5179/HB1264 restore Medicaid coverage for adult hearing aids, which was cut during the recession.

