

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE UNMET IN-HOME SERVICE NEEDS OF THE UNDERSERVED AND MOST VULNERABLE SENIORS: MAKING MICHIGAN A 'NO WAIT' LIST FOR SENIORS**

WHEREAS, many seniors want to continue remaining in their own homes and community throughout their lifetime, as evidenced by a December 2011 AARP study showing that almost 90 percent of seniors 65 years and older expect and desire to remain in their home for as long as possible; and,

WHEREAS, Madison Heights Seniors deserve to exercise their right of independence and stay in their homes for which they have worked a lifetime; and,

WHEREAS, there is a moral and ethical obligation to support every effort to empower Seniors' longevity, comfort and safety, especially for those who don't qualify for Medicaid benefits or cannot afford private home care; and,

WHEREAS, representing an increase of 20% from the prior fiscal year, the Madison Heights Meals-on-Wheels program delivered almost 21,000 once-a-day hot lunches to homebound seniors in FY 2012-13, averaging 87 meals per day and over 1,700 meals per month.; and,

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, 14.2% of the 65 and older population who live in Madison Heights are poverty stricken as compared to 8.2% in Michigan; and,

WHEREAS, the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging (OSA) provides programs such as Community for a Lifetime which assists seniors to 'age in place' at home and Meals-on-Wheels which facilitates basic nutritional value for homebound seniors; and,

WHEREAS, in reality, the demand for OSA services such as Community for a Lifetime and Meals-on-Wheels is significantly greater than the supply, as evidenced by a permanent seniors' waiting list for these basic necessities; and,

WHEREAS, the minimal one daily meal for only five days per week is tragically insufficient to sustain proper health and well-being. The OSA's home and community based services currently provide care to vulnerable homebound seniors but have greater potential to enable all seniors to remain living a healthier and more satisfying life in their own home; and,

WHEREAS, according to research from the Area Agency on Aging I-B (AAA-1B), of those seniors on waiting lists, 43% have died, 21% have moved to a nursing home and 36% have continued to wait. In dramatic contrast, of those who received services, 80% were maintained in their homes, 20% have died and none were moved to a nursing home; and,

WHEREAS, in 2014 alone, almost 4,500 seniors remain on wait lists for basic services through the OSA and 50% have been on the wait list for more than 180 days, according to a white paper presented by the Michigan Silver Key Coalition, a group of individuals and organizations committed to supporting older adults to remain living independently in their own home; and,

WHEREAS, the Area Agency on Aging I-B states that within just the last couple of years from FY 2012 to FY 2014, there has been a 1.7 million dollar reduction of OSA Federal Funding Allocations, and OSA State General Funds were reduced by \$4.4 Million between FY 2008 and FY 2014; and,

WHEREAS, the reduction in funding also directly affects caregivers of homebound seniors. Those selfless many caring for their loved ones in times of need have an enormous responsibility and according to AAA-1B, they are “three times more likely to interfere with their work as well as five times more likely to have suffered a financial loss due to their caregiving responsibilities”; and,

WHEREAS, The Silver Key Coalition projects that a \$5 million investment will yield many collateral benefits to taxpayers, businesses and the state, including the creation of approximately 200 new jobs, and return of approximately \$350,000 in state tax revenue and 75% of food purchased from Michigan-based sources.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Madison Heights strongly believes that significantly more State and Federal funding is necessary to address the drastic needs of impoverished and underserved home bound seniors in Madison Heights as well as throughout southeastern Michigan.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Madison Heights applauds the efforts of the Silver Key Coalition to help Madison Heights Seniors stay in their homes and reduce the number of underserved seniors by eliminating wait lists for basic services such as home-delivered meals, home care and other basic necessities. In addition, through this public statement, Council wishes to create a sense of urgency of this issue as well as heighten awareness of those individuals who have been on these wait lists for extended periods of time and who are more likely to experience dire consequences.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that the City supports the effort to make Michigan a "no wait" state for senior in-home services, advocating a \$5 million increase in state funding for the Fiscal Year 2015 from the Governor's office and the Michigan legislature, and a \$10 million multi-year increase in state supported in-home services through the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging by Fiscal Year 2018.

FINALLY BE IT RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be provided to U.S. Senators Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow, U.S. Representative Sander Levin, Governor Rick Snyder, State Representative Jim Townsend, and State Senator John Pappageorge.