

 February 14, 2019

Dear Friends,

The Executive Committee of the NC Partnership to Address Adult Abuse (NCP3A) joins with other advocates to support action to make needed improvements to North Carolina’s Adult Protective Services (APS) system.

There is a profound, statewide, historic lack of resources needed to meet the needs of a growing number of abused, neglected, and financially exploited vulnerable adults as required by NC G.S. 108A, Articles 6 and 6A. Resources needed include (but are not limited to) funding for trained APS line staff and services to remediate abuse; support to modernize NC’s Adult Protective Services (APS) statute and data system; requirements for mandated training and caseload size for APS staff.

* In recent years, there has been a major increase in the need for APS services. In 2009, there were 17,073 reported cases of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of adults. In SFY 17-18, this number increased to 30,128 reported cases of which 15,563 were “screened-in” by county departments of social services to determine if the adults reported were in needs of APS.
* In SFY 17-18, $26.2 million was expended on APS. Funding was 0.01% state, 82% county, and 18% federal Social Service Block Grant.

The NC Partnership urges the NC General Assembly toauthorize adequate, recurring State funding to address the lack of resources needed to protect NC’s vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation as required by NC G.S. 108A, Articles 6 and 6A.

These other organizations have included APS system improvements as legislative priorities, including:

The Senior Tar Heel Legislature urges the General Assembly to recognize and value its vulnerable citizens by making available $7 million in recurring funds in the State budget to meet the growing need for Adult Protective Services in North Carolina and conduct a comprehensive evaluation/review of these services to ensure this protection is adequate.

The Social Services Consortium (NC Directors and Boards of Social Services) urges the provision of adequate funding at the local departments of social services for adult protective services and guardianship and ensure greater protection of this population by evaluating current state laws while also improving behavioral health services for vulnerable, older and disabled adults.

The NC Coalition on Aging 2019 Legislative Priorities includes a request to invest state dollars in adult protective services (APS), mandated core services provided by county departments of social services to our state’s most vulnerable adults.

The Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging urges funding of APS reforms with state revenues.

To avoid further squeezing low-wealth counties or diverting limited federal funds from other underfunded programs essential to older North Carolinians, these (APS) reforms should be funded through the appropriation of additional state revenues.

AARP NC 2019 legislative priorities include a request to improve systems to prevent adult abuse and neglect by, among other things, increasing APS support and training in all 100 counties, updating adult guardianship laws and improving court data systems, and creating 13 new LTC Ombudsman positions.

Additionally, the Partnership to Address Adult Abuse joins with AARP NC and Friends of Residents of Long-Term Care to urge the NC DHHS to hire 13 additional LTC Ombudsmen to reach the national standard of one LTC Ombudsman for every 2,000 residents.

These priorities are consistent with NCP3A’s mission to *promote safe communities for older adults and adults with disabilities in NC through prevention, recognition, protection and prosecution of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.*

