

S&DS' Legislative Priorities for 2005

End of Session Status Report

Background:

One of Senior & Disabled Services (S&DS) responsibilities as the Area Agency on Aging and Disability Services for Lane County is to serve as an advocate for those we serve. To this end, S&DS, with the help of the members of its Senior Services and Disability Services Advisory Councils, endeavors to inform and educate members of the State Legislature about the needs and concerns of seniors and people with disabilities. To facilitate this work, every even-numbered year S&DS develops a set of priorities for the upcoming legislative session which convenes in January of the odd-numbered year.

The issues for the 2005 legislative session identified by S&DS' Advisory Councils and adopted as agency priorities by the Lane Council of Governments' Board of Directors are set forth below in summary form. Additional information provided for each priority includes: 1) a brief analysis of how it fared in the Governor's Recommended Budget for 2005-07, 2) the identification of 2005 legislative bills which pertain to it, and 3) a status report on these bills.

S&DS' PRIORITIES FOR THE 2005 LEGISLATIVE SESSION:

Restore funding for needed long term care services (Medicaid Levels 14-17, and full restoration of the biennial appropriation for Oregon Project Independence).

How addressed in the Governor's Recommended Budget? Not funded. Eligibility for Medicaid long term care limited to clients at Levels 1-13. Further, the Governor's Budget capped Oregon's home and community-based care caseload at 21,100 persons and called for the elimination of the Relative Adult Foster Care program. Regarding Oregon Project Independence (OPI), biennial funding was reduced from \$9.7 million to \$3.9 million, and persons served were reduced from 2,150 to 950 persons, statewide.

Status at End of Session:

DHS budget (including Medicaid long term care): HB 5038

Medicaid Levels 14-17 not restored, BUT sufficient funds were appropriated

by the Legislature to prevent the imposition of a caseload cap and the elimination of the Relative Adult Foster Care program, as recommended by the Governor.

OPI:

SB 870 - OPI Modernization (Morrisette, Barnhart, Farr, Hanna, Holvey, Roblan): *SB 870 C-Engrossed was approved by both chambers. It awaits the Governor's signature. This legislation accomplishes the following: 1) creates a dedicated trust fund for OPI, to shelter OPI funds from other uses by DHS; 2) begin to create a dedicated funds source for OPI; the trust fund will be the recipient of surplus funds from the Senior and Disabled Property Tax Deferral Program, beginning in 2007; and 3) will allow OPI to serve adults with physical disabilities in the future.*

DHS budget - HB 5038: *OPI's biennial appropriation was approved at \$12 million, close to the pre-2003 high of \$13.7 million.*

Restore funds for health care (OHP Standard) and prescription drugs (Medically Needy Program).

How addressed in the Governor's Recommended Budget? Not funded. OHP Standard continued as a scaled-down program for 24,000 individuals with no State General Funds committed to it. Coverage for prescription drugs, via the Medically Needy Program or other mechanism, is not funded.

Status at End of Session:

DHS budget (including Medicaid health care): HB 5038

OHP Standard continued as a scaled-down program. The Legislature appropriated sufficient funds to maintain Dental Services for categorically eligible OHP enrollees, but failed to maintain funding for Vision Services. Finally, in the final hours of the session, the Legislature approved HB 3108, which allows DHS to make non-specified cuts in services in order to balance the OHP budget.

Restoration of cigarette tax dedicated to OHP: HB 2048

This bill died in the House Revenue Committee.

Oregon Prescription Drug Program: SB 329 (Morrisette)

SB 329 A-Engrossed passed the Senate, but died in the House Budget Committee.

Pharmaceutical Patient Assistance Program: SB 598 (Walker)

SB 598 A-Engrossed passed Senate, but died in the House Budget Committee.

Adequately staff Adult Protective Services (APS).

How addressed in the Governor's Recommended Budget? *This issue was not addressed in the Governor's Recommended Budget.*

Status at End of Session: *Not addressed by the Legislature.*

Expand funding for special transportation services.

How addressed in the Governor's Recommended Budget? *This issue was not addressed in the Governor's Recommended Budget.*

Status at End of Session: *Not addressed by the Legislature.*

Create an ombudsman for users of managed health care services.

How addressed in the Governor's Recommended Budget? *This issue was not addressed in the Governor's Recommended Budget.*

Status at End of Session:

SB 776 (Morrisette):

This bill died in the Senate Budget Committee.

Keep the promise implied by the enactment of HB 2288 (2003) B fund Equity@ for Area Agencies on Aging and Disability Services.

How addressed in the Governor's Recommended Budget? *Not funded.*

Status at End of Session:

SB 770 (Morrisette): *This bill died in the Senate Budget Committee.*

HB 2573: *This bill died in the House Budget Committee.*

DHS Budget - HB 5038:

\$2 million State General Funds and \$2 million federal matching funds were appropriated by the Legislature to begin to address the funding equity problem confronting Area Agencies on Aging and Disability Services.

Revise one-sided DHS contracts with local governments for the provision of human services.

How addressed in the Governor's Recommended Budget? *This issue was not addressed in the Governor's Recommended Budget.*

Status at End of Session:

HB 3303 (Ackerman):

This bill passed the House, but was opposed by the Governor. Given a veto threat, the Senate refused to consider it in the final hours of the session.

Adequately fund counties= services to assist military veterans obtain federal veterans benefits.

How addressed in the Governor's Recommended Budget? Not funded.

Status at End of Session:

SB 10:

This bill died in the Senate Budget Committee.

SB 763 (Morrisette, Prozanski, Verger, Walker):

This bill died in the Senate General Government Committee.

SB 1100 (Barnhart, Beyer, Farr, Hanna, Roblan):

This bill passed both chambers and awaits the Governor's signature. It addresses a number of topics concerning veterans, including the distribution of newly appropriated funds for the operation of county veterans' services offices (see SB 5629 below).

SB 5629:

This bill passed both chambers and awaits the Governor's signature. Among other provisions, it appropriates \$2.6 million in new funding for the operation of county veterans' services offices.

HB 2700:

This bill died in the House Budget Committee.

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Status of items of importance not addressed in S&DS' priorities for the 2005 Legislative Session:

- 1. General Assistance Program:** The Legislature concurred with the Governor's recommendation that this program be eliminated. As a result, it will end on September 30, 2005.
- 2. Disability Employment Initiative:** The Legislature concurred with the Governor's recommendation that this program be eliminated. As a result, it will end on September 30, 2005.
- 3. Title XIX Meals on Wheels Reimbursement Rate:** The efforts of O4AD and the Area Agencies on Aging and Disability Services to have the Legislature direct the Department of Human Services to fairly compensate the AAAs for Meals on Wheels delivered to Medicaid clients were unsuccessful. The current reimbursement rate, which has not been adjusted for several years, is \$5.24/meal. A recent DHS study documented that a \$7.00/meal reimbursement rate is warranted.

Last Saved: August 17, 2005