



## Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging

*Advocacy. Action. Answers on Aging.*

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February 22, 2023

The Honorable Sara Carruthers

Ohio House of Representatives

77 S. High Street 13<sup>th</sup> Floor

Columbus, Ohio 43215

Chair Carruthers:

On behalf of the undersigned stakeholders, we offer our support for the Ohio Department of Aging's \$40 million one-time "Healthy Aging Grant" included in the Governor's budget. These funds would assist counties in supporting older Ohioans, helping them to reside in their homes longer, and helping to circumvent more costly institutional care. As family members, caregivers, providers, public entities, and private businesses we all benefit from the availability of these funds to help us better care for our aging Ohioans.

Ohio's aging population is growing at a rapid pace, and we are already beginning to see the impact on our workforce. Families need help caring for their loved ones who are often living under the same roof safely and for as long as possible. Moreover, as Ohio's economic development opportunities grow, future employees will want to live in communities that provide for quality of life across the age spectrum. These funds can be utilized at the local level in creative ways to provide for their aging Ohioans' specific to their needs, including retrofitting their homes to address challenges with utilizing stairs, installing bathtub rails, and transportation needs.

This investment can assist the state in utilizing less Medicaid funding on institutional care services by helping Ohioans age safely in their homes or with a family member. These funds can help prevent falls and home accidents, which can lead to costly hospital visits and often life altering conditions such as a traumatic brain injury. A small investment in a local community can make a considerable difference in the quality of life for some of our most vulnerable Ohioans.

We look forward to cooperating with the Department of Aging and local county officials to increase services to older Ohioans. We respectfully ask that you retain this provision in the budget so that our local communities can work on strategic proposals to support our aging Ohioans. We believe that this investment is critical for the future of aging Ohioans and demonstrates that Ohio is a great place to live work and grow for a lifetime!

Sincerely,

Larke Recchie