

MEMORANDUM

A.10168 (Seawright)/ S.9091 (Cleare)

AN ACT to amend the elder law, in relation to establishing a state master plan on aging dashboard

LeadingAge New York supports A.10168 (Seawright)/S.9091 (Cleare), which would direct the New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) to create a public dashboard tracking legislative and budgetary action related to the 2025 Master Plan for Aging.

The 2025 Master Plan for Aging (MPA) is a comprehensive framework of over 100 proposals aimed at supporting aging individuals in New York, their families, and care providers. The MPA identified nine pillars for long-term improvement of aging services, which emphasized senior wellness and safety initiatives, housing access, service modernization, workforce support, and more. The MPA report's final recommendations suggest legislation, government programs, regulatory reforms, and private initiatives that would help more New Yorkers age with dignity, independence and the support they need to thrive.

The MPA was carefully developed over two and a half years with input from thousands of stakeholders. Multiple state agencies, eight subcommittees, and 34 workgroups provided perspectives from civil servants, aging individuals, care providers, and social services agencies. The council also held 20 town halls, 10 industry roundtables, and heard from 10,000 New Yorkers through public survey responses. These stakeholders, and indeed all New Yorkers, deserve visibility into the progress being made on implementing the MPA. An MPA dashboard would both track and celebrate the successes of the plan, while also clearly identifying what more needs to be done. In fact, the final MPA report itself calls for the State to “continue efforts to establish appropriate evaluation tools” to monitor progress toward achieving the MPA’s vision.

There is a well-documented and worsening crisis in access to high-quality long-term care (LTC) and aging services options. New York State has a growing number of older adults and demand for LTC, affordable senior housing and other aging services is rising just as the availability of options is shrinking. Many LTC providers are being forced to close their doors or reduce the number of people they serve, due to ongoing workforce shortages and the persistent shortfall between reimbursement and costs. The MPA offers numerous low-to-no cost reforms that would help address access to care challenges, but action must be taken to realize their benefits.

New York’s demographic trends make this issue urgent. Between 2015 and 2040, the number of adults over 85 will double in New York.¹ Approximately 70% of adults who live beyond age 65 will need LTC at some point in their lifetime.² As our formal workforce continues to contract, informal caregivers are bearing a heavier burden. According to AARP, 26% of adult New Yorkers are caring for loved ones, and most of them – 77% – provide care without pay. Many face significant financial, physical, and emotional stress, and over two-thirds struggle to care for their own health.³

Now is the time for the 2025 MPA recommendations to be carried out. A public dashboard is essential to demonstrate the State’s commitment to addressing the needs of older adults, caregivers and families.

For these reasons, LeadingAge New York supports A.10168 (Seawright)/ S.9091 (Cleare).

¹ Cornell University Program on Applied Demographics New York State Population Projections; <http://pad.human.cornell.edu/>; accessed Jan. 4, 2019.

² Johnson, R.W. “What is the Lifetime Risk of Needing Long-Term Services and Supports?” ASPE Research Brief. April 2019.

³ AARP, Caregiving in the US 2025: Caregiving Across States, accessed at <https://www.aarp.org/pri/topics/ltss/family-caregiving/caregiving-in-the-us-2025-caring-across-states/>.