



# Illinois Association of Area Agencies on Aging

## 2024 State Legislative Priorities

### SUPPORT UNPAID FAMILY CAREGIVERS

**Increase Illinois Family Caregiver Act<sup>1</sup> funding from \$5m to \$6m** to support unpaid family caregivers through the Area Agency on Aging Caregiver Resource Centers. An AARP study found there are over 1.5 m caregivers in Illinois providing 1.24 billion hours of unpaid work annually with an estimated value of \$17 billion! Support for unpaid caregivers is proven to delay nursing home placement and save Medicaid dollars.

*A 75-year-old male caregiver to his sister states the T-Care assessment was “to see if you are under stress and help you find resources . . . without that, I was just floating on my own”; I want policy makers to know that caregivers need “reliable expert assistance that they can trust and depend on.” I want society “to realize that when trying to help someone with dementia, you don’t have any sense of how to go about it . . . without help, you are just struggling in the dark.”*

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### INCREASE STATE FUNDING TO COMBAT SOCIAL ISOLATION ...

**From \$1m to \$2m** to support programs to alleviate isolation among older people. Lack of Social Connection increases the risk of premature death as if smoking 15 cigarettes a day. The US Surgeon General – Vivek H. Murthy, MD, cites in his 2023 Report: “Loneliness can have profound effects on mental Health, heart disease, stroke and dementia, resulting in billions of dollars spent in health care costs.”

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### INCREASE STATE FUNDING FOR ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE AND RELATED DISORDERS...

**From \$1m to \$2m** to “fill the gaps” in services and fund evidence-based training for caregivers. Without this support, caregivers may face placing their loved ones into long-term care settings prematurely. Alzheimer’s is the 6th leading cause of death and most expensive disease in America.

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### SUSTAIN STATE FUNDING FOR HOME DELIVERED MEALS

This funding meets increased demands for meals, supports the skyrocketing costs for food, gas, and labor.

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### REDUCE ELDER FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION

Reported scams impacting those aged 60+ ballooned from \$931 million in 2021 to \$1.54 billion in 2022, an **increase of 66%**<sup>2</sup>. Unreported incidents would push these numbers much higher. Resources are needed for Area Agencies on Aging to educate and increase awareness of scams and reduce financial exploitation.

*For more information, please contact I4A Legislative Committee Co-Chairs:  
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<sup>1</sup> PA 93-0864 was passed in 2004 but went unfunded until 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Protecting Older Consumers: A Report of the Federal Trade Commission, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023