

Older Adults Lobby Day – Tuesday, May 13, 2025 at 11:30 AM

- I'm honored to speak before you all today at Older Adults Lobby Day.
- I'd like to begin by thanking Betsey Crimmins and her team at Mass Aging Access, and all of the event's co-sponsors—AARP Massachusetts, Action for Boston Community Development, Dignity Alliance, the Alzheimer's Association, the Massachusetts Senior Action Council, Massachusetts Councils on Aging, the Massachusetts Association for Mental Health and the Older Adult Behavioral Health Network—for bringing us together.
- I also want to thank my co-chair on the Aging and Independence Committee, Senator Jehlen, and her staff for their amazing partnership. I'm so pleased to be collaborating with her team once more this legislative session.
- I'm incredibly proud that last session, the Long-Term Care Bill, now Chapter 197 of the Acts of 2024, was signed by Governor Healey.
 - This was the first major legislative update for our nursing homes and assisted living in over 25 years.
 - Chapter 197 increases oversight, supports our dedicated workforce, improves access to care, and improves the quality of care our loved ones receive in nursing homes and assisted living
 - This was truly a collaborative effort, one that would not have been possible without your advocacy
- Chapter 197 addressed some of our most pressing needs in nursing homes and assisted living. I'm hoping this session we can make similar progress in the home care space
 - Thanks to Betsy and Mass Aging Advocacy, the Governor included in a recently filed FY25 supplemental budget the funding needed (\$60m) to close projected deficits
 - The recently passed House FY26 budget increases funding for home care by \$60m across two accounts over FY25 levels
 - One of the Committee's priority bills this session is Home Care Licensure which we will be making a big push for

- Right now, these agencies are not required to be licensed by the state despite providing essential services to thousands of older adults in their homes.
 - The bill would create a basic framework to ensure quality, safety, and accountability in home care. It would protect older adults and their families, while also supporting the workers who deliver these services every day.
 - With more and more people choosing to age at home, this is a commonsense step that's long overdue.
 - We're committed to getting it across the finish line this session.
- We are all living and aging in a time of real uncertainty.
 - Proposed federal cuts to Medicaid and the possible elimination of the Administration for Community Living would pose a serious threat to the programs so many of our residents rely on.
- Today, I'm here to reiterate my commitment to keeping our programs strong, even in the face of uncertainty.
- Advancing legislation that makes a true impact for our older adults and caregivers, and protecting critical programs and services, requires all of us—lawmakers, providers, advocates, and older adults—to work together.
- That's why your advocacy is so important. And it's why we're not letting up.
- Your presence here at Older Adults Lobby Day sends a powerful message: older adults deserve to be prioritized in our policies, in our budgets, and in every corner of our communities.
- Thank you for sharing your stories, your time, and your commitment. I'm grateful for your partnership and look forward to everything we'll accomplish together this session.