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In Wilkes-Barre, Governor Wolf Discusses How His 2017-2018 Budget is New Way Forward for Seniors

Wilkes-Barre, PA – Today, Governor Wolf joined local leaders, legislators, and Department of Aging Secretary Teresa Osborne to discuss how his 2017-2018 budget is a new way forward for Pennsylvania’s seniors.

“My budget proposal will help improve the quality of life, and care and benefit choices, for older Pennsylvanians across the Commonwealth. Over the past two years, we have shown our commitment to our children’s education, our seniors, those suffering from the effects of the heroin and opioid abuse crisis, and our workers. This budget continues that success, while creating a new way forward for the Commonwealth, and placing us on secure financial footing by saving taxpayers over 2 billion dollars through cuts, savings, and efficiencies.”

“The Wolf Administration is focused on serving and protecting older Pennsylvanians, and the Governor’s proposed budget articulates our shared commitment to ensuring that seniors have access to the services and supports they need to age in place with the dignity and respect they deserve,” said Secretary Osborne.

Currently, older Pennsylvanians have to work through multiple agencies for the health and human services that they need. The 2017-2018 budget creates a new, unified Department of Health and Human Services that consolidates the Departments of Aging, Drug and Alcohol Programs, Health, and Human Services in order to dramatically improve our ability to deliver services that will improve lives. Older Pennsylvanians will now have one point of service with the Department of Health and Human Services. This will result in less confusion and easier access as constituents and their families seek services.

Seniors will not see any cuts to their programs due to the creation of this new

department and it will have no impact on how lottery fund monies are used to support senior programs. In fact, senior benefits and programs will be bolstered by the focus of a single agency.

The 2017-2018 budget also builds on the Wolf Administration's commitment to enabling citizens to age in place by preventing instability of health and wellness and protecting the most vulnerable from abuse, neglect, abandonment, and exploitation.

To strengthen programs for seniors, this budget implements Community Health Choices, a program that will improve services for hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvanians by allowing people to stay in their homes as they age.

It also builds on the Wolf Administration's push to serve over 65,000 older Pennsylvanians and people with disabilities in their homes and communities instead of in nursing facilities and would serve almost 5,000 more people in their homes and communities.

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