



Illinois Association of Area Agencies on Aging



Illinois Aging Network Alert March 25, 2019

A report of the impact Area Agencies on Aging have on Illinois seniors.

The Illinois Aging Network celebrates Governor Pritzker's nomination of Paula Basta for Illinois Department on Aging Director, but fears lack of timely state funds will hurt aging services!

The Illinois Aging Network is pleased to support Governor J.B. Pritzker's appointment of Paula Basta as the new head of the Illinois Department on Aging and recommends her for Senate confirmation. We are delighted to have an appointee knowledgeable about the aging community and the programs offered through the Illinois Department on Aging and the network of Area Agencies on Aging designated under the federal Older Americans Act.

Ms. Basta's first challenge as acting director will be to address the impact of the slow state of General Revenue Fund (GRF) cash flow to Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). To date, the 13 AAAs in Illinois have received only 22-44% of their state funds but should have received 67% of allocated funds.

Without consistent payments of these critical funds, our providers cannot deliver services. The Aging Network is owed approximately \$15,000,000 in state funds which means that

- **1.5 million+ meals are in jeopardy**
- **200,000+ older adults' requests for information and assistance may go unanswered**
- **20,000+ residents of long-term care facilities will have no one to speak up for them**

These critical funds are essential for delivering services such as home delivered meals and transportation that keep older adults independent in their own homes instead of costlier long-term care facilities. When funding slows, programs get scaled back resulting in waiting lists, loss of essential staff positions, and loss of volunteers. Once a staff member or volunteer is lost, it is very difficult to recruit and train new staff and volunteers to maintain service delivery.

The Illinois Aging Network supports the confirmation of Paula Basta as the Director of the Department on Aging and we encourage the timely cash flow of state general revenue funds to support critical aging services for older adults in Illinois.

For more information, contact Susan C. Real, Legislative Chair (309-829-2065 ext. 218) or Joy Paeth, I4A President (618-222-2561).