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Governor Scott: Florida Families First Budget Supports Florida Seniors

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Governor Rick Scott today highlighted investments in the Florida Families First budget that supports Florida seniors.

Governor Scott said, “The Florida Families First budget invests in critical programs and priorities important for the safety and well-being of Florida seniors. It is important we provide the safety nets our seniors deserve.”

The Florida Families First budget supports Governor Scott’s commitment to helping Florida’s elderly community:

- **Senior Hot Meal Program:** \$950,000 for congregate and home delivered meal programs for seniors in Miami-Dade County. This funding was necessary because of cuts from the federal sequestration process.
- **Adult Day Care Services in Miami-Dade County:** \$500,000 for adult day care services for activities in non-institutional protective environments for seniors who are unable to remain in their home without constant supervision.
- **Alzheimer’s Respite Services:** \$1.2 million for Alzheimer’s respite services to provide more funding for caregiver services.
- **Aging Resource Centers:** \$1.3 million for the Aging and Disability Resource Centers which will be used to meet the increased workload associated with the transition to the Statewide Medicaid Managed Care Long-Term Care (SMMC LTC) program. This will help ensure that the clients currently served in the Medicaid waiver programs are smoothly transitioned to the new program and that the intake portion of the new program will operate efficiently on an ongoing basis.
- **Medicaid Waiver Program:** \$25.2 million for both the Aged and Disabled Adult Medicaid Waiver Program and the Nursing Home Diversion Program which will allow for the most frail seniors on the wait list to be served. Many of the individuals on the wait list are being served in a more costly Medical nursing home bed.

- **Community Care for the Elderly (CCE):** \$3.7 million for the Community Care for the Elderly program which will help to serve over 1,000 individuals who are at the highest risk of entering a nursing home.
- **Office of Public Guardian:** \$50,000 to expand public guardianship services in Bay County which will allow those indigent elders currently without access to public guardianship assistance to receive services.
- **Memory Disorder Clinics:** There are 2 of 15 statutorily designated memory disorder clinics that do not receive state funding. \$445,000 will be used to fund these remaining two memory disorder clinics, which are both in areas where a need has been determined by the Alzheimer's Disease Advisory Committee.

Department of Elder Affairs Secretary Charles T. Corley: "Governor Scott has made clear his priority to care for Florida's seniors. With this significant increase in funding, we are able to remove the frailest elders from our waitlists, and they can now be served through these critical programs."

Max Rothman, President and CEO, Alliance for Aging, Inc: "One of the major impacts of the federal sequestration cuts were reductions to meals served to elders in need. The importance of providing just one hot meal a day to these folks cannot be overstated. This additional funding for meals to eligible elders in Miami-Dade County will help offset these reductions and mitigate the risk of having to place them in a more expensive nursing home environment."

Margaret Lynn Duggar, Executive Director, Florida Council on Aging: "The Florida Legislature and Governor Rick Scott are to be commended for addressing the needs of Florida's frail elders who need assistance to remain in their homes. Programs like Community Care for the Elderly, the Aged and Disabled Waiver and Nursing Home Diversion provide the in-home services, like meals on wheels and assistance with bathing, that help elders be independent and safe in their homes. These additional funds are essential to help some of the nearly 50,000 seniors on the waiting list for these services."

Bill Aycrigg, President and CEO, CARES of Florida: "This significant increase in Community Care for the Elderly funding will ensure that the frailest of seniors on the waitlist for care who are either not eligible for Medicaid or who are waiting for Medicaid determination will receive appropriate home and community-based services. These individuals are most at risk for more expensive nursing home placement."

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