



**MICHIGAN SENIOR  
ADVOCATES COUNCIL**

MISSION

COLLECTIVE VOICE  
AND ACTION TO  
PROMOTE  
HEALTHY AGING,  
DIGNITY AND  
INDEPENDENCE

“NEVER DOUBT  
THAT A GROUP  
OF THOUGHTFUL,  
COMMITTED CITIZENS  
CAN CHANGE THE WORLD,

INDEED,  
IT'S THE ONLY THING  
THAT EVER HAS.”

**Margaret  
Mead**

MSAC:  
AN ACTION TEAM OF  
SENIOR LEADERS WHO  
STUDY ISSUES AND  
INFORM ELECTED  
OFFICIALS



**MICHIGAN SENIOR ADVOCATES  
COUNCIL**

6105 W. St. Joseph, Suite 204  
Lansing, Michigan 48917  
Phone: 517-886-1029  
Fax: 517-886-1305



**Tel: 517-886-1029**

## WHAT IS MSAC?

The Michigan Senior Advocates Council (MSAC) is a unique group of senior leaders who journey to Lansing every month from across the state. MSAC meets in the State Capitol to study senior issues, and inform elected officials. Delegates devote a significant portion of each meeting to visiting legislators' offices and talking with them and their staff.

MSAC consists of 35 older adults appointed by Area Agencies on Aging. They have three things in common:

- Age—delegates are 55 and over.
- Ties to Aging Network—every delegate is an Advisory Council or Board Member of an Area Agency on Aging.
- Leadership—delegates are active in local and state senior groups, understand the aging network and its services, and are recognized as knowledgeable leaders.

Beyond these similarities, MSAC is a diverse group which cuts across racial, ethnic and economic categories. Delegates hail from big cities and rural communities. In this way, MSAC represents Michigan's diverse senior population. MSAC is nonpartisan and does not endorse political candidates.

## A BRIEF LOOK BACK...

MSAC was created in 1977 by the Area Agencies on Aging Association of Michigan (AAAAM) to fulfill the mandate of the Older Americans Act to advocate on behalf of older adults. The delegates quickly established themselves as advocates in the fullest sense, speaking



up on senior issues, and giving advice to Area Agencies on Aging, the legislature and state government. Since its creation, MSAC has generated thousands of letters and petitions, numerous phone calls, and countless

face-to-face contacts with legislators and state officials. And all of that activity has paid rich dividends! MSAC deserves much credit for our aging services system, including

- the first prescription drug program
- statewide expansion of the MI Choice Waiver
- funding increases for meals-on-wheels and other in-home services.
- creation of home heating assistance
- state funding for dial-a-ride programs
- long term care reform legislation..

MSAC has also left its mark on many pieces of legislation benefiting older adults such as elder abuse prevention, nursing home quality regulations, Medicare supplemental insurance standards, patient rights legislation, Blue Cross Blue Shield reform, and guardianship reform.

These are but a small sample of MSAC's accomplishments.

## AFFILIATION WITH AAAs

MSAC works hand-in-hand with Michigan's 16 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), who appoint its members and provide financial and staff support through their statewide association, AAAAM. AAAs are a nationwide network of over 600 agencies created by the federal Older Americans Act in 1973. That year, President Nixon and Congress decided that a separate network of agencies was needed to create a service system that would be a viable alternative to nursing homes. AAAs are experts on aging. They create new programs with public-private partnerships, find funds to expand services, and advocate on behalf of older adults, especially those unable to advocate for themselves.

MSAC CHAIRMAN  
PAM NIEBRZYDOWSKI, R.N.  
LAKE CITY

MSAC VICE-CHAIR  
RAY BYERS, PLYMOUTH

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