



Contact: Adrienne Warren, (313) 446-4444, ext. 5260 or
(313) 715-3783 cell

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Detroit Long Term Care System Change Task Force to present recommendations to Michigan Legislature at March 27 Policy Forum

DETROIT—After seven months of diligent effort on the part of 154 committed community stakeholders, the Detroit Long Term Care System Change Task Force will present its policy recommendations and strategies that support system changes to the Detroit delegation of the Michigan State Legislature in a policy forum on Friday, March 27, beginning at 9:30 a.m. at Greater Grace Conference Center, 23500 W. Seven Mile Road, Detroit, MI 48219.

At the forum, a presentation of the task force public policy agenda will be presented by Betsy Rust of Plante & Moran after some opening remarks by the Honorable Samuel “Buzz” Thomas. Following the presentation there will be a break out session of round table discussions with forum participants (or attendees) regarding the policy recommendations presented.

This policy forum focuses on public policy recommendations developed during the Task Force’s first six months of work. The recommendations are focused on changing the local long term care system to improve the quality of life for nursing home residents, older persons, adults with disabilities, caregivers and service providers.

The task force, co-chaired by Michigan State Senator Samuel “Buzz” Thomas, State Representative George Cushingberry, Jr. and Paul Bridgewater, President & CEO, Detroit Area Agency on Aging, is comprised of eight subcommittees, a News Media/Advocacy Group and a State Advisory Group. The eight subcommittees are Access, Business & Economic Development, Legislation & Regulations, Nursing Home Management, Long-Term Care Stakeholder Engagement, Independent Living Services, Training and Quality.

Each subcommittee is co-chaired by leading professionals that touch all areas of the long-term care system. Some of the task force members are accountants, economists, housing and urban planners, health care professionals, nursing home owners, and numerous others from local and state government.

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Also serving on the task force are Area Agency on Aging representatives, members of community-based organizations, professional and nonprofessional caregivers, retirees and representatives from skilled nursing care facilities, senior and disability advocacy groups, service providers, financial institutions, labor unions and the academic community. The task force is committed to quality care in all long-term care settings who have a vested interest in the assured delivery of high quality long term care services.

“The system change we’re looking for is not simple, but we believe our recommendations will give Detroit policymakers the roadmap and ammunition they need to advocate for policy and budget changes in Lansing. Many of those changes can direct more dollars to more preventive care, more home and community-based services, and more choices for consumers throughout their lives and continuum of care,” said Paul Bridgewater.

We believe every consumer has a right to quality health care and quality long-term care services. With thoughtful planning and deliberation, even in our current recession, we should be able to gain more efficiencies, more parity, and more quality services from the same long-term care dollars we spend today. Detroit consumers need more options for quality long-term care services, and consumers should expect nothing less, adds Mr. Bridgewater.

The task force will continue to develop policy recommendations that support system change. In Phase II recommendations will focus on program development that can support reform efforts in the long-term care system. A final report will be prepared by September 30, 2009 with research findings and the recommendation.

To RSVP for the policy forum, call (313) 446-4444, ext. 5228. Or, for further information about the task force, please call the Detroit Area Agency on Aging at (313) 446-4444, ext. 5803 or go to www.daaa1a.org.

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