

PLEASE CALL THE MAYOR'S OFFICE ON MARCH 23

The District of Columbia is facing a \$322 million budget gap for FY 2012.

**While this is an improvement on the previous \$600 million projection,
it is still a significant gap.**

On April 1, the Mayor will publish his budget and show how he plans to bridge this gap. To do so, he must make serious cuts to many of the District's most important programs. We fear that programs and services that benefit our most vulnerable citizens, seniors, will be on the chopping block.

There are approximately 100,000 seniors (age 60+) in the District of Columbia, with some 14% living at or below the poverty line. We all know that while seniors play an integral role in District life – serving as volunteers, mentors, community activists, veterans, caregivers, voters, and taxpayers – many require support to meet their daily needs.

Today, the community agencies serving our disadvantaged seniors are under-funded... Adult Day Centers are filled to capacity, programs have long waiting lists, positions that provide critical services remain vacant, and some agencies have had to eliminate some services. Adjusting for inflation, local dollars for the DC Office on Aging are 11% lower than 10 years ago. Additional cuts would certainly make a challenging situation worse.

In preparation for the FY 2012 budget, agencies were instructed to prepare budgets significantly smaller than the previous year. We understand that, as of March 17th, the Mayor has agreed to include funding for the Office on Aging at the same level as 2011—providing vital support for the senior service agencies that provide basic human needs: home delivered meals, transportation, caregiver/respite support, counseling, case management, adult day health care, legal aid and financial advice, life alert systems and so much more. The magnitude of cuts for other District agencies funding home care, support for grandparents raising grandchildren and other vital services are unknown to us at this point. What is known is that **these services save lives and time is running out before the Mayor's budget is finalized.**

**THE DC SENIOR ADVISORY COALITION IS ASKING YOU TO CALL THE MAYOR'S OFFICE
on March 23, toll-free, at**

1-888-843-6735

AND TELL HIM:

“Older adults are a significant part of the District's community fabric and should be a priority in the FY 2012 budget. Please maintain funding for the DC Office on Aging, community-based long term care, Grandparent Caregiver Program, and other important programs that enhance the quality of life for older residents of the District. Cutting these services now will certainly place a greater burden on the District, overwhelming the current system of support and care.”