



Milwaukee County

Department on Aging



Holly Davis
Executive Director
(414) 289-6010

*Milwaukee County
Commission on Aging*

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County Executive Chris Abele
Milwaukee County Courthouse
901 N. 9th St, Room 306
Milwaukee, WI 53233

Dear County Executive Abele:

I am writing on behalf of the Advocacy Committee of the Milwaukee County Commission on Aging to request your help to restore and reinvest funding for Milwaukee County Senior Centers. Milwaukee County Senior Centers have been the jewel and focal points of aging programs and services for many years, and have provided excellent programming for older adults for those many years.

Unfortunately, this wonderful legacy is threatened by an extremely large decrease in funding for senior centers in the 2018 budget that has resulted in layoffs of more than 25% of senior center staff. This \$200,000 (18%) cut comes after four years of level (no increases) funding for senior centers.

A few of the impacts of these cuts include two senior centers having to share one manager, elimination of two vital program coordinator positions, remaining staff having to assume additional duties at meal sites, reduction or possible elimination of senior day trips, and the cancellation of an annual fund raising event at one senior center. While the major concern that we have heard about for several months is the long-term impact of deferred maintenance on the five senior center buildings, the impact of the budget cuts, however, falls solely on senior center programs. We hope that you will agree that this not an appropriate way to address the maintenance issue.

As you know, the County Board of Supervisors has set aside \$200,000 in a contingency fund to mitigate the corresponding cut in the senior center budget. Despite addressing the two conditions established by the Board for the release of these funds, the Department on Aging did not request any of the contingency funds when it submitted its report to the Finance and Audit Committee on March 15, 2018.

We request that you direct the Department on Aging to work with the contractor, Interfaith/Unison, to develop a budget for the utilization of the contingency funds, and present that budget at the next meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee. We believe that such a request will result in positive action by the County Board to

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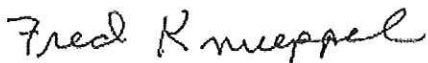
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The mission of the Milwaukee County Department on Aging is to affirm the dignity and value of older adults in this county by supporting their choices for living in, and giving to, our community.

make the funds available to restore excellence in senior center programming for older adults in Milwaukee County. We are aware of the disagreements that have existed between you and the County Board but we see this as a wonderful opportunity to work together to solve the problem and make a public statement that older adults in Milwaukee County are a priority for both the executive and legislative branches of government.

We look forward to hearing back from you regarding our request. Also, we would be happy to meet with you to further discuss this matter, and how we can work together in the future to address the longer-term facilities issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fred Kneuppel".

Fred Kneuppel
Chair, Advocacy Committee