



November 18, 2024

Dear (County Council Member)

I am writing on behalf of LifeSpan, Inc., who provide services to older adults in Allegheny County under contracts with the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) Area Agency on Aging.

I am urging your support of the 2.2 millage tax increase proposed by the County Executive. I am gravely concerned about the potential impact that not supporting this millage tax increase will have on LifeSpan and the vulnerable older adults depending on our services for their most basic needs – food, nutrition, health and wellness, and socialization.

LifeSpan provides Home Delivered Meals services through a contract with Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging's Options program. LifeSpan serves 210,000 meals to 1,520 older adults annually. LifeSpan is the largest provider of Options Home Delivered Meals in Allegheny County.

Services LifeSpan provides to DHS and to Allegheny County residents and taxpayers:

Home Delivered Meals program:

Through access to the Home Delivered Meals program, many truly frail and at-risk older adults receive nutritious meals regularly, as well as wellness checks by trained delivery staff checking on them at least three times weekly. Without these meals, these older adults may not be able to maintain living independently. The direct impact factors of the program include:

- Wellness checks
- Reduction of isolation
- Support for independent living
- Face-to-face health and safety monitoring

Food insecurity and isolation are two of the social determinants of health that directly correlate to being able to maintain independence and a healthy, quality lifestyle. Older adults receiving meals typically do not have the formal or informal support to remain independent and obtain food.

Without the home delivered meals, an increase in the following will likely occur:

- Placement in a Nursing Home or Assisted Living facility would be the only option for many older adults receiving home delivered meals if the home delivered meals service is ended.
- Nursing Home and Assisted Living facilities in the County are already at capacity.
- With the proposed Kane Hospital closures, more older adults needing immediate placements would put an additional strain on an already overwhelmed system.
- There would not be sufficient assistance in the community to assist with the placement process, putting the older adult at risk for neglect.
- Reports to Older Adult Protective Services would increase drastically in a system that already is challenged to provide support to those who are in need.

Senior Centers program:

Senior Centers are the “gateway to aging services”. They provide not only a hot daily meal for older adults, but programming, socialization, and health and wellness activities to help sustain and maintain independence.

The six LifeSpan Senior Centers serve over:

- 63,300 units of daily center services meals and/or social recreation to 4,200 unduplicated older adults annually.
- Center volunteers assisting with services provide 21,000 hours annually to our mission.

Funding and Detrimental Impact:

- In the County’s FY 2024 budget, it is already the case that LifeSpan and all other Home Delivered Meals and Center Services agencies are not fully funded at 100% of the cost of each program they provide. Any funding decrease to our DHS contracts in the upcoming budget year would have a detrimental impact on the ability to continue our work.
- **Many, if not all, of these services to the older adults of Allegheny County and their families would no longer be able to be provided without the millage tax increase.**

Again, I am urging the passage of the 2.2 millage tax increase proposed by the County Executive to fully fund the County Budget.

Thank you for your time and attention to this very important issue.

Sincerely,



Virginia Jurofcik
Chief Executive Officer
LifeSpan, Inc.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Allegheny Council District	Council Member	Email
At Large	Bethany Hallam	Bethany.Hallam@alleghenycounty.us
At Large	Samuel DeMarco III	Samuel.Demarco@alleghenycounty.us
District 1	Jack Betkowski	Jack.Betkowski@alleghenycounty.us
District 2	Suzanne Filiaggi	Suzanne.Filiaggi@alleghenycounty.us
District 3	Anita Prizio	Anita.Prizio@AlleghenyCounty.us
District 4	Patrick Catena	Patrick.Catena@alleghenycounty.us
District 5	Dan Grzybek	Daniel.Grzybek@alleghenycounty.us
District 6	John F. Palmiere	John.Palmiere@alleghenycounty.us
District 7	Nicholas Futules	Nicholas.Futules@alleghenycounty.us
District 8	Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis	Michelle.Chapkis@alleghenycounty.us
District 9	Robert J. Macey	Bob.Macey@alleghenycounty.us
District 10	DeWitt Walton	DeWitt.Walton@alleghenycounty.us
District 11	Paul Klein	Paul.Klein@alleghenycounty.us
District 12	Robert Palmosina	Robert.Palmosina@AlleghenyCounty.us
District 13	David Bonaroti	David.Bonaroti@alleghenycounty.us
Chief of Staff	Kenneth Varhola	Kenneth.Varhola@alleghenycounty.us