The following is a general email script which can be used for those unable to attend Older Adult Lobby Day.  We strongly encourage personalization to make the message your own!

Dear [LEGISLATOR NAME]:

[INCLUDE 1 -2 SENTENCES EXPLAINING WHY YOU'RE WRITING OR WHY THESE ISSUES ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU - ARE YOU A BOARD MEMBER, AN ASAP/AAA STAFF MEMBER, A CONSUMER?]

In Massachusetts, 23% of the population is age 60 or older and it's estimated that by 2030, that will rise to 26%.  In fact, Massachusetts has 143 older adults (60+) for every 100 school-age children.  Among these older adult households, approximately 25% have incomes below $20,000.  With the projected growth in those aged 60+ and the need to provide more services, level funding is equivalent to a budget cut, and the recent 9C cuts of close to $10.8 million in programs for older adults were devastating to the Aging Services Access Points (ASAPs) who provide much-needed support and services.

With this background in mind, I am asking you to support these budget priorities for FY25:

**Increase the Senior Nutrition Program Line Item 9110-1900 by $3 million**

* This funding for this essential program was cut by $1 million through the Governor’s 9C cuts in January. ASAPs provide 10 million meals annually to older adults, addressing food insecurity and nutrition needs and providing wellness checks; more funding is needed to address higher consumer demand and skyrocketing food costs.

**Increase the SHINE Health Benefits Counseling Program Line Item 9110-1455 by $3 million**

* Utilization of this program increased by 42% in FY22 v. FY21 and demand continues to grow; funding for the program needs to follow this growth in utilization.

**Increase the Elder Mental Health Outreach Team (EMHOT) Line Item 9110-1640 by $2 million**

* EMHOTs reduce hospitalizations for behavioral health crises, saving $885,000 to $2.8 million in the first six months of 2023; this funding would expand the program into more areas of MA.

**Increase the Elder Supportive Housing Program Line-Item 9110-1604 by $3.8 million to expand the program by 20 Additional Sites**

* This additional funding could add up to 2,000 additional units at new supportive housing sites, which is greatly needed during the current housing crisis.

I'm also asking you to support the following legislation being considered in the 2023 – 2024 Legislative session:

**An Act Allowing Spouses to Serve as Caregivers [**[**S.67**](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S67)**/**[**H.216**](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H216)**]**

* Adds "spouse" to the current list of family members who can act as paid caregivers for MassHealth home and community based services.

**An Act Clarifying Rate Setting Processes for Home Health and Home Care Services [**[**S.755**](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S755)**/**[**H.1195**](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H1195)**]**

* Encourages setting pay rates to attract and retain qualified caregivers, to address staffing shortages and current wait lists for home care.

**An Act Relative to Intensive Case Management for Clinically Complex Older Adults [**[**S.370**](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S370)**/**[**H.630**](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H630)**]**

* Increases ASAP reimbursement for complex case management which can keep at-risk consumers safely in their own homes.

**An Act relative to expanding the availability of personal care homes for older adults [**[**S.385**](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S385)**/**[**H.634**](https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H634)**]**

* Enables housing providers to convert houses into small group homes providing room and board as well as long-term care services.

You can read more about Mass Home Care's [**legislative priorities for 2023-2024**](https://masshomecare.info/wp/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/MHC-Legislative-Priorities.pdf) and [**budget priorities for FY25**](https://masshomecare.info/wp/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/MHC-Budget-Priorities.pdf) on our website: <https://masshomecare.info/wp/advocacy-action/>

Thank you for your work to support older adults and healthy aging throughout Massachusetts - and especially in your district!

[YOUR NAME]

[YOUR ADDRESS - AT LEAST INCLUDE CITY]

[YOUR TELEPHONE # - OPTIONAL]