

Media Advisory
September 21, 2017

First Priority of Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging Advanced

The Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging [applauds the announcement](#) by Gov. John Hickenlooper and Lieutenant Governor Donna Lynne of a new position of Senior Advisor on Aging in the Governor's Office.

In November 2016, the Planning Group established [nine key recommendations](#) for actions to be taken to address a sizeable demographic shift that will see Colorado's population aged 65 and over rise by more than 508,000 — an increase of 68 percent — by 2030. This will result in more than 1.2 million residents in this age group, nearly one out of every five Coloradans. Recognizing the need to have vision and oversight over an issue that will cross sectors and policy areas, the Planning Group prioritized a governor's office position as the first of its nine recommendations.

Support for the position was provided by The NextFifty Initiative, which will fund the position for three years.

"We are pleased that the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and The NextFifty Initiative took action to address the first recommendation of the action plan we approved just 10 months ago," says Jim Riesberg, chair of the Planning Group. "Having a government office at a high level is critical to shine light on the issues that are important to address Colorado's changing demographics."

The [Planning Group](#), created by the General Assembly and approved by the Governor in 2015, is charged with examining the impact of the shifting aging demographic on the economy, workforce, businesses, state and local revenue budgets and fiscal policies, family caregiving and public and private options for long-term care, services and support and several other issues.

The [November action plan](#) called for the Governor to "create a permanent, high-level office or position within the executive branch to be accountable for and lead the state government's work on aging issues." It further recommended the office to set consistent statewide policy priorities, coordinate the aging-related work of state agencies and workgroups, identify gaps and unmet needs, drive public education efforts concerning the effects of aging in Colorado, and to collect, analyze, and share data across agencies to improve decision-making related to workforce development and participation, health and wellness, and other key areas related to aging policy.

According to Chairman Riesberg, the Planning Group will continue to push its other recommendations, which, in part includes:

- Providing an in-depth assessment of the demographic changes that will affect our state workforce, economy, budget, and public sectors serving the aging;
- Investing in research and data to determine system gaps and barriers by studying health, caregivers, jobs, retirement savings, transportation, housing, and the work of individual Colorado communities to meet the growing needs;
- Building public awareness about the impact of the potential crisis on Colorado families;
- Protecting seniors from abuse, neglect, exploitation, fraud and crime; and
- Mapping unforeseen vulnerabilities, such as changes in federally allocated program dollars, health care coverage, and state budget restrictions.

The Planning Group continues to work on a requested update of the strategic plan scheduled for release in 2018, while also focusing on implementation around the state to help realize all nine recommendations. The Planning Group meets on the second Monday of each month, from noon until 3 pm at 1290 Broadway, First Floor Independence Pass Conference Room, in Denver. Coloradans are welcome to attend, or may participate by conference call, 515-739-1034 and use the access code: 216470#

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