

Senior Action Leader



A VOICE FOR SENIORS AND THEIR FAMILIES

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www.MassSeniorAction.org

Winter 2023

Congress Stops Extra SNAP Benefits.

Seniors look for ways to save as the price of food continues to rise.

The recently passed Congressional Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 ends the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) extra, temporary benefits, known as SNAP Emergency Allotments, as of February 2023. This means that households will receive their last payment on **March 2, 2023**. SNAP emergency allotments have allowed households to receive the maximum SNAP benefit amount for their household size, with a minimum benefit amount of \$95 a month.

Since March 2020, Massachusetts has elected to utilize this temporary benefit program that was made

available under the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act. SNAP Emergency Allotments currently bring over \$95 million of federal funds into the state each month, supporting more than 630,000 households to buy food.

MSAC Boston member, Maria Roldan, summed up what the cut to funding means to the community, “Right now food is more expensive than ever. Lowering the SNAP amount will leave people nowhere to go but to the food pantries which are already at their limit and overwhelmed because the need is so great.”

The state has launched a new website: [Mass.gov/Extra COVID SNAP](http://Mass.gov/Extra-COVID-SNAP) to help

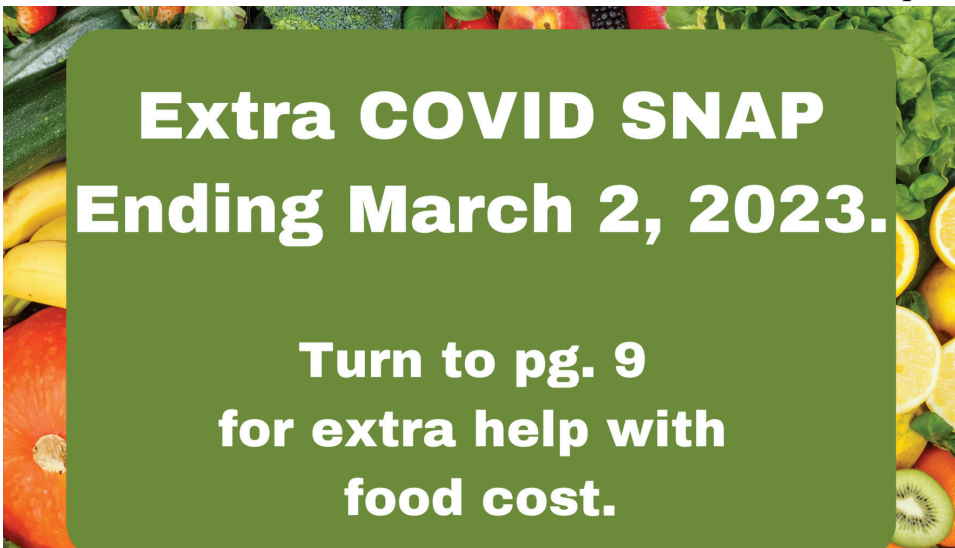
residents plan for the end of these temporary federal benefits. Over the next several months, individuals and families should explore any optional expenses that may increase their regular SNAP benefits, including:

If they have medical costs over \$35 a month for anyone in their SNAP household who is 60 or older or has a disability,

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**Extra COVID SNAP
Ending March 2, 2023.**

**Turn to pg. 9
for extra help with
food cost.**

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Executive Director: Carolyn Villers

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Social Media:

Twitter: @SeniorActionMA

Facebook: www.facebook.com/MassSeniorAction

SOME meetings are virtual due to COVID-19. Contact an organizer to join.

Chapter Meeting Information:

VIRTUAL BOSTON CHAPTER

When: 2nd Thursday of the month at 1:00 pm

Location: Charles St. AME Church
551 Warren Street, Dorchester

VIRTUAL CAMB./ SOMERVILLE CHAPTER

When: 3rd Friday of the month at 11:30 am

Location: Cambridge Senior Center
806 Mass Avenue, Cambridge

NORTH SHORE CHAPTER

When: 3rd Wednesday of the month at 11:00 am

Location: 10 Church Street, Lynn

CONTRIBUTORS:

Edna Pruce - MSAC President
Carolyn Villers - MSAC Executive Director
Pam Edwards - MSAC Organizing Director
Tracey Carpenter - MSAC Organizer
Claudia Pérez - MSAC Organizer
Jake Tabor - MSAC Organizer
Shayla Fonfield - MSAC Asst. Organizer
Joanne Paul, Photography

IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL METRO N. CHAPTER

When: 4th Wednesday of the month at 1:30 pm

Location: Malden Senior Community Center
7 Washington Street, Malden

VIRTUAL GREATER SPRINGFIELD CHAPTER

When: 4th Wednesday of the month at 1:00 pm

Location: Springfield Hobby Club
309 Chestnut Street, Springfield

STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Edna Pruce, President
Kathy Paul, 1st Vice President
Rosa Bentley, Treasurer
John Ratliff, Secretary
Karen Lynch, Membership Coordinator
Elaine Correia, Bristol County Delegate
Bernice Ezell, Gr. Springfield Delegate
Paulette Spriggs-Durrett, Boston Delegate

VIRTUAL BRISTOL COUNTY CHAPTER

When: 4th Thursday of the month at 1:00 pm

Location: Greenwood Terrace,
Westport Housing Authority
666 State Road, Westport

NORTH SEACOAST AFFILIATE

Meetings paused. Members will receive monthly updates.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Enclosed are membership dues for:

\$10 1-year individual \$15 1-year couple \$50 individual lifetime \$75 couple lifetime

NAME(s): _____

ADDRESS: _____ APT #: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

Yes, I would like all notices sent by email, instead of postal mail, including this quarterly newsletter.

Make checks payable to: MSAC

Mail to: Mass Senior Action, 108 Myrtle Street, Suite 112, Quincy, MA 02171

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Kathy Paul

Happy 2023 Mass Senior Action.

This is my first article as President of the Mass Senior Action Council. At our November convention, members selected their new State Officers to serve on the MSAC Executive Committee. You can see your new Exec. Committee in the photo below along with the former officers.

I want to share how thankful I am to all of you. Most of you know me and have stood with me at rallies, hearings, and actions. I love Mass Senior Action and all of the members who participate to make our communities a better place.

I am thankful we are able to lift people up who never had a voice. I am thankful for the success we have made on all of our issues including the 2023 expansion of the

Medicare Savings Program.

This expansion will bring relief to tens of thousands of seniors and I am thankful but know we are not done.

As my late husband, the veteran, would say "we will not leave anyone behind." We will continue to fight for economic security for all Massachusetts seniors. We will address the hideous asset limit that had not been changed since 1981 when you could get a loaf of bread for 50 cents and a dozen eggs for 87 cents!

Thanks to MSAC members we were able to increase the asset limit for the Medicare Savings Program but it was not enough.

People who worked and were able to put away a small and when I say small I mean SMALL savings account are



being penalized and unable to access basic health benefits.

We are going to build a blue shirt army to tackle this asset injustice and we want you and your friends to join us. Become a member, attend a meeting, join your chapter leadership. Let's make 2023 the senior tsunami the Massachusetts state house has never seen and bring justice to seniors across the Commonwealth.

Mass Senior Action Council Executive Committee



Former and Current Executive Board members.

Back row: Paulette Durrett (Boston Delegate), Rosa Bentley (1st V.P.), Karen Lynch, Bernice Ezell (Secretary), John Ratliff, Martha London (Treasurer), Joanne Paul (Membership Coordinator). **Front row:** Kathy Paul (President), Edna Pruce (Emeritus), Mary Napolitano (2nd V.P.), Elaine Correia (Bristol County Delegate).

Lower Your Cable and Internet Bill



AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM

WHAT IS IT?

The Affordable Connectivity Program is an FCC program that helps connect families and households struggling to afford internet service.

The benefit provides:

- Up to \$30/month discount for internet service;
- Up to \$75/month discount for households on qualifying Tribal lands; and
- A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet purchased through a participating provider.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

A household is eligible for the Affordable Connectivity Program if the household income is at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, or if a member of the household meets at least one of the criteria below:

- Participates in any of the following assistance programs: SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, Veterans Pension or Survivor Benefits, SSI, WIC, or Lifeline;
- Participates in any of the following Tribal specific programs: Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance, Tribal TANF, Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, or Tribal Head Start (income based);
- Participates in the Free and Reduced-Price School Lunch Program or the School Breakfast Program, including through the USDA Community Eligibility Provision;
- Received a Federal Pell Grant during the current award year; or
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a participating broadband provider's existing low-income internet program.

TWO STEPS TO ENROLL

1

Go to AffordableConnectivity.gov to submit an application or print a mail-in application

2

Contact your preferred participating provider to select an eligible plan and have the discount applied to your bill.

Some providers may have an alternative application that they will ask you to complete.

Eligible households must both apply for the program and contact a participating provider to select a service plan.

LEARN MORE

 Call 877-384-2575, or

 Visit fcc.gov/acp



MSAC 2022 ABRIDGED Biennial Convention Reaffirms commitment to “Take Charge!”

On November 17, 2022, the MSAC social justice army, dressed in their notorious blue shirts, gathered for their 2022 Biennial Convention. The first in person statewide event for the organization since the pandemic with an option to participate by video as well.

President Pruce called the convention to order and then addressed the nearly 100 members in attendance, “It is my honor to bring our abridged 2022 Biennial Convention to order. The pandemic delayed today’s proceedings but it did not delay our activism.”

President Pruce reminded the attendees, “The convention is a special time for Mass Senior Action. It is a day to celebrate our victories and recommit to our fight for social justice.”



Celebrating and recommitting is just what the MSAC members did. Many there were first time convention attendees and chose workshops to build a foundation with MSAC’s theory of change in the MSAC 101 workshop and gathered tools to move decision makers in the lobby workshop. Other seasoned members attended workshops to address the gaps in healthcare, housing, transit justice, and long term care.

Now armed with information and energized from feeling the collective power in the union hall, the body committed to build senior power and make sure our voices are heard with all decision makers at the local, state, and federal level.

With the current MSAC top officers facing organization term limits, five new Executive Committee Officers were elected with a contested race for the office

“I will be 90 years old in March. It is my participation in Mass Senior Action that fills me with energy and I want other seniors to feel that energy and sense of purpose too.”
Edna Pruce

of membership coordinator. Elaine Correia, 86, Bristol County Chapter and Joanne Paul, 53, North Shore Chapter addressed the members to share why they wanted to be a part of the leadership team. In a narrow vote, Joanne Paul was elected as the next membership coordinator.

Participating by video, member Fred Grosso, made a motion to allow both to serve but was not passed due to current organizational bylaws. Former Executive Committee member, John Ratliff, made a motion at the end of the convention for the new leadership to take up the motion by Grosso in the new year.

Optimism and encouragement to participate filled President



Pruce’s final remarks as President, “Our advocacy at the local, state and national level is recognized for being strategic and smart. If you are not already a member I encourage you to join. If you are not currently on your local chapter board find a way to build senior power in your area. I will be 90 years old in March. It is my participation in Mass Senior Action that fills me with energy and I want other seniors to feel that energy and sense of purpose too.”

The day ended with members, Mary Joyner, Joyce Durst, and Audrey McCloud leading the room in a unity song, the black national anthem, “Lift every voice and sing”.

Members left the convention with new MSAC swag items of blue jackets, shirts, hats, and a commitment to the MSAC motto, “We do not take it, we take charge!”



Senior Action Wins Historic Healthcare Expansion

60,000 Seniors to Access \$300 Million in Benefits

Thanks to hundreds of senior activists, Massachusetts is expanding eligibility for Medicare Savings Programs starting January 1, 2023

Current MSP Eligibility - Apply Now if you Qualify

You are:	Your income is at or below:	Current asset limit
Single Individual	\$2596./mo	\$16,880
Married Couple	\$3,453./mo	\$25,200

To Apply For MSP: Call: 1-800-841-2900 or go to the Mass.gov website: <https://tinyurl.com/Massmsp>

For more information contact MSAC: info@masssenioraction.org or 617-284-1275 - www.MassSeniorAction.org

We are not done yet!

MSAC is going to fight to increase the asset limit. Join us, add your voice, and help us ensure health care a right for all.

MSP Application: lower your out of pocket cost. 2 page application, check the SNAP box.



Medicare Savings (Buy-In) Programs Application for people who are eligible for Medicare

Who can use this application?

Individuals of any age who are receiving Medicare and are only seeking help with payment of their Medicare premiums and cost sharing.
If you want to apply for other MassHealth benefits, (as well as assistance with Medicare costs), call MassHealth Customer Service at (800) 841-2900, TTY: (800) 497-4648 for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech disabled for a different application. Please print clearly and fill out all sections.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a federal program that helps you buy healthy food each month.
 Check this box if you want this application to be sent to the Department of Transitional Assistance to serve as an application for SNAP benefits.
You must read the rights and responsibilities on pages 3 through 7 and sign on page 2 to proceed with the application.

General Information

Who is applying? you you and your spouse
If you and your spouse live together, you must also give us information about your spouse even if he or she is not applying for benefits.

You	Last name	First name	MI
Street address		City	State Zip
Mailing address (if different from above) <input type="checkbox"/> homeless		City	State Zip
Date of birth / /	Gender <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	Telephone number ()	
Preferred spoken language		Preferred written language	
Social security number		Medicare claim number	
Your Spouse	Last name	First name	MI
Date of birth / /	Gender <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	Telephone number ()	
Preferred spoken language		Preferred written language	
Social security number		Medicare claim number	

Income

Fill out this section for you and your spouse. List the gross monthly income (before taxes and other deductions, such as the Medicare Part B premium).

Source of income	Gross monthly income before taxes and deductions.	
Social security	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____
Pensions	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____
Federal veterans' benefits	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____
Annuities or trusts	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____
Dividends and/or interest	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____
Income from a job (before deductions)	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____
Rental income (after expenses)	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____
Other (please specify) _____	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____

This is NOT insurance. This pays for your out of pocket Medicare insurance cost.

Assets

Fill out this section for you and your spouse.

Source	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____	You and your spouse \$ _____
Savings accounts	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____	You and your spouse \$ _____
Checking accounts	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____	You and your spouse \$ _____
Second car (first car is noncountable)	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____	You and your spouse \$ _____
Certificates of deposit	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____	You and your spouse \$ _____
Stocks	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____	You and your spouse \$ _____
Bonds	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____	You and your spouse \$ _____
Mutual funds	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____	You and your spouse \$ _____
Other (please specify)	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____	You and your spouse \$ _____
Total assets	Your \$ _____	Your spouse's \$ _____	You and your spouse \$ _____

Sign this application.

X _____ Date _____
Signature of applicant or Authorized Representative

X _____ Date _____
Signature of Spouse or Authorized Representative

Both you and your spouse must sign if your spouse lives with you. By signing, you agree to and understand the following

By signing this application, I hereby certify that I have read and agree to the Rights and Responsibilities included in this application on pages 3 through 7. I hereby certify under the pains and penalties of perjury that the submissions and statements I have made in this application are true and complete to the best of my knowledge, and I agree to accept and comply with the rights and responsibilities of the Medicare Savings Program (Buy-In).

If I have checked the SNAP box on page 1 of this application I am applying for the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP). I certify that I understand and agree to the rights, rules, and penalties of the SNAP program, as outlined below. I ask that MassHealth send my information, including Protected Health Information subject to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), to The Department of Transitional Assistance for the purpose of applying for SNAP benefits.

Important: (For Medicare Savings Program (Buy-In) applicants only)

If you are submitting this application as an authorized representative, you must submit an Authorized Representative Designation Form (ARD) to us or have a form on record for us to process this application. The ARD is at the end of this application.



Voter registration information is enclosed in this packet.

Once you have filled out and signed this form, send it to:
MassHealth Enrollment Center
PO Box 290794
Charlestown, MA 02129-0214

Or fax it to:
(857) 323-8300

SNAP con't from pg.1

if their housing costs have gone up (rent/mortgage), and if one is working, looking for work, or in school, tell DTA about any child or disabled adult care costs.

Households can tell DTA about these changes by uploading information via the agency's free mobile app and online portal DTA Connect, calling the DTA Assistance Line at 877-382-2363, visiting a local DTA office, or working with one of the department's over 100 SNAP outreach partners. SNAP outreach partners are local community organizations who work with DTA to help people apply for and maintain their SNAP benefits.

Also, Massachusetts households who get SNAP benefits automatically can participate in the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP). HIP puts money back on an EBT card when SNAP is used to buy local fruits and vegetables from HIP farm vendors, up to \$40, \$60 or \$80 a month depending on household size. Find a HIP vendor at DTAFinder.com. MSAC President Kathy Paul, "So many of my neighbors do not know about the HIP money for fresh fruits and vegetables. We need to get the word out about this. It is basically extra food money each month."

More resources available to help individuals and families:

60 and over apply for medical deduction call: 877-382-2363

Community Food

Resources: call or text Project Bread's Food Source Hotline, 1-800-645-8333

If you have children under age 5 you may be eligible for the WIC nutrition program: Mass.gov/WIC or call 800-942-1007

All K-12 students can get free school meals this school year

Rent or mortgage help: Call 2-1-1 or go to Mass.gov/covidhousinghelp

Fuel Assistance help paying for heat: go to Toapply.org/MassLIHEAP or call 800-632-8175

Money to help pay for the internet or a computer: GetInternet.gov, AccedeAInternet.gov

Get help with 2022 taxes and any COVID stimulus or Child Tax Credit money you are owed: FindYourFunds.org

If you are 60 and over or disabled, apply for a medical deduction to increase your SNAP benefit amount by calling: 877-382-2363.

What is MassOptions?

Are you an elder looking for help, such as in-home care ... an individual with a disability seeking help to live independently...or a family member or caregiver trying to locate services for a loved one?

MassOptions can help! We're a free resource that links you to services that help you or a loved one live independently.

What Does MassOptions Do?

We empower you to make informed choices by making access to community services and supports easier. Trained specialists from MassOptions give you fast, personalized attention. All you need to do is tell them about yourself or what you need to live independently. You can even stay on the line while they connect you with an appropriate community resource or organization.



You can speak to a specialist at MassOptions, Monday - Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, call us toll-free at 1-800-243-4636

Lawsuit: Mass. residents ‘unnecessarily institutionalized’.

State Failed to offer proper options for independent living.

Mass Senior Action Council joined in support of six Massachusetts residents with disabilities who say they’ve been unnecessarily institutionalized in nursing facilities for prolonged periods in filing a class action lawsuit in federal court, calling for the state to expand its residential programs so they can return to living in a community setting.

Edna Pruce, at the time the lawsuit was filed explained why MSAC joined as a plaintiff, “It is a shame the state has not properly funded long term care services. Since 2006, Mass Senior Action members have made it clear that seniors prefer to stay in our homes as long as we are able and the federal law mandates that the state fund those options properly.”

The lawsuit, filed in US District Court in Boston, alleges top state officials have failed to provide adequate services and support to help individuals with physical or mental disabilities have access to medical care through the state’s Home and Community-Based Services programs also known as home care.

The alleged failure disproportionately impacts people of color and is a violation of the Medicaid Act as well as the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits the unjustified segregation of people with disabilities in institutions.

“These are people who

want to live in a community and have the ability to with support, but the Commonwealth isn’t giving them that opportunity,” Andrew London of the Boston law firm Foley Hoag said in an interview.

The firm is collaborating with the Northampton-based Center for Public Representation, the national advocacy organization Justice in Aging, and Greater Boston Legal Services to represent the plaintiffs.

They range in age from a 73-year-old man to a 54-year-old woman, all of whom struggle with various physical disabilities and mental health illnesses.

About 22,000 adults with disabilities are institutionalized in nursing facilities across the state, the lawsuit claims, and their paths to those facilities can vary.

Steven Schwartz of the Center for Public Representation said nursing facilities have become a “dumping ground” for other state-supported services, such as mental health programs, when they are no longer willing to support someone due to problematic behavior, staffing levels, or other reasons.

One example is of a person living alone with his two dogs. His bathroom was on the second floor and his children were afraid for him to go up and down the stairs. Instead of retrofitting his home, the children chose to



Photo: Kiki Chaiton with MSAC members fighting for home care funding at the state house in 2006. “We want to stay in our homes as long as we are able.”

put him in a facility at the cost of \$10,000.00 per month. The gentleman had to leave his home, give up his precious pets and go to a place he did not want to be because of stairs. Why couldn’t the money be used to make his home accessible?

The lawsuit asserts that the state should be capable of expanding its residential programs to include all seniors and individuals with disabilities.

The everyday decisions people make — what to eat and when, what time to go to bed, or when to wake up — are taken away when living in a nursing facility, Schwartz said. And for someone who may not need to be there, life can quickly become miserable. “Simple aspects of daily life that we take for granted are the very essence of what it is to leave a nursing facility and go to someplace you can truly call home,”

The Fair Share Amendment Passed. How will this improve transportation?

In some ways, public transportation in Massachusetts has never been in worse shape.

Seniors know this to be true when we wait hours for the RIDE, struggle with inaccessible stops and broken elevators, or find it impossible to plan our days and appointments around an infrequent bus route.

And for seniors, these problems aren't just academic. When we age out of being able to drive, or are limited to public transit by our fixed incomes, the bus, train and RIDE become vital to living independently in our own communities.

Unfortunately, after being starved of funding for decades, Massachusetts' public transit is in debt, understaffed, and buried under a backlog of deferred repairs.

But despite the dire state in which the T and the state's other, smaller transit authorities find themselves, right now there exists a huge opportunity for major improvements, maybe more than there has been in decades. And seniors will have a vital role to play in pushing for those changes to happen.

Let's break this down:

In the new year, we'll have a new governor, attorney general, and secretary of transportation. Governor-Elect Healey needs to hear from as many people as possible

that major investments in public transit should be a top priority. We do know that she made investments in transit reliability and safety a key part of her campaign, and that she will appoint a new transportation secretary when she arrives in office. And a new attorney general also means a fresh face in the state's top oversight role.

The historic passage of the Fair share amendment means that the state will be able to raise more money for transit without hiking fares. This fall, Massachusetts voters passed the Fair Share amendment by ballot initiative, thanks in part to the hard work that groups like Mass Senior Action Council did to get out the vote. The amendment adds a new 4% tax on annual income over 1 million dollars, which will raise an additional one and a half to 2 billion dollars each year, earmarked specifically for education and transportation spending. It's not nearly enough to plug the T's huge deficits, but it's a solid step in the right direction and will fund some important projects.

So what does this mean for Mass Senior Action?

Our public transit committee -- which re-formed in 2022 -- will need to come up with a clear vision for the kind of public transit system we want, and then organize our fellow seniors to advocate for it. This could look like more funding for the ride; a commitment



Photo: MSAC Boston member and longtime public transit activist, Louise Baxter attends a rally to advocate for a fare based on the riders income, including for The RIDE.

to higher frequency on the buses; a set of standards for accessibility; lower fares; and more.

It's important to react and fight back against things like rollbacks in service or fare hikes, but we also need to challenge the idea that our system can't be improved. We see examples of excellent public transit systems in countries all over the world, that allow seniors to age with decency without needing a car, or a loved one who can drive them around. There's no reason that we can't have public transit that gets us wherever we need to go in a timely and safe way.

We want you to be a part of that conversation -- join our January transit committee meeting on zoom on the fourth friday of the month at 12pm. Contact MSAC organizer Jake Tabor for information: jtabor@masssenioraction.org.

Members are the key to MSAC's Success



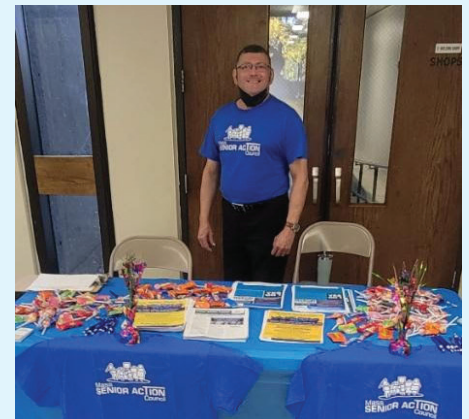
Metro North members met with State Rep. Ultrino to increase language access and voter participation.



Springfield Chapter members reaching out to the community to increase voter turnout and build senior power.



New Members in Lynn show off their new blue shirts and are excited to be a part of the most effective grassroots organization in the state.



Boston Chapter: Roberto Lobos shared the work of MSAC in Framingham.

MSAC Staff Contact Info

- Carolyn Villers (617) 435-1926
- Pam Edwards (781) 864-2596
- Tracey Carpenter.. (413) 328-4659
- Jake Taber(617) 637-7067
- Claudia Pérez (*Habla Español*) ...
(857) 236-5719
- Jamaleek Bush:(617) 284-1275
- Shayla Fonfield.....(617) 284-1275

The power of the people is much stronger than the people in power.



Meet The Member: Pamela Taylor, Boston Chapter

Pamela Taylor lives in the Melville Park Neighborhood in Dorchester and is retired from Mass General Hospital where she worked as human resource administrative secretary.

When Pamela retired, there was never any doubt that she would be active with the many organizations she belonged to because activism is stamped in her genes. At a young age she was recruited by her grandmother, who was president of the Boston NAACP in the 1950's, to help get out the vote. Pamela would accompany her grandmother to drop off literature across the city and prepare mailings to let voters know about the people running for office. Together they traipsed many streets and ran up the stairs of the brownstones to increase the minority vote.

During Pamela's college years in the mid-sixties she participated in many set-ins, protests, and rallies against the Vietnam war and the military industrial complex.

Pamela found out about MSAC when driving in Jamaica Plain and observed a rally with people who looked her age chanting "we don't take, we take charge!" Pamela recalled getting out of her car to find out the "people in blue shirts" were protesting

a greedy landlord who was blocking affordable senior housing next to the Turtle Swamp Brewery. Pamela joined in the rally that day and said she was "hooked" from then on.

Since that day, Pamela has been actively participating in many of the MSAC actions, "I remember with pride fighting for the senior housing next to the Brewery. At our last demonstration I portrayed Monty Gold (the greedy Landlord) by wearing The Grinch costume to highlight that his "greedy side" was blocking the much-needed housing. Playing the Grinch was fun and added a theatrical flair to the rally! The result of our activism is that Monty Gold dropped the lawsuit, and the construction of the senior housing moved forward."

Pamela recalled another important moment, "As I said, I love being involved in the protest rallies, especially the big one I attended in Springfield. It was a very emotional protest directed at the city's Mayor and Chief of police for not holding police officers who were responsible for shooting a young, black, teen accountable. Others were there to bring attention to different officers who were found guilty of excessive force. Even though the rally had dark moments there were



bright spots too. I remember being in awe as I stood united in our famous blue shirts with MSAC members from across the state. That assembly made me realize the size of the MSAC's people power. It really is so impressive to be a part of this organization."

Pamela shared a few of the many things she loves about MSAC, "The people and the loyalty of the membership to improve the lives of Massachusetts seniors is very motivating. Many of us come from such different backgrounds but are focused on conquering anything that is standing in our path for justice."

Looking ahead to 2023, Pamela is excited to continue MSAC's work to increase affordable housing and lower the cost for healthcare, improve public transportation and options for long term care, along with environmental justice. There is something for everyone at MSAC.

MISSION: As a democratic, grassroots, senior-run organization, Massachusetts Senior Action is committed to empowering seniors and others to act collectively to promote the rights and well-being of all people, but particularly vulnerable seniors.



Massachusetts
SENIOR ACTION
Council

Senior Action Leader

108 Myrtle Street , Suite 112
Quincy , MA 02171

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Boston, MA
Permit No. 55361



Donate Now



SENIORS IN ACTION
2022



2022 HIGHLIGHTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS



**Don't
Just
Take it,
Take
Charge!**

HEALTHCARE



Won further eligibility expansion of the Medicare Savings Program to 225% of the Federal Poverty Level. As many as 60,000 low-income seniors will gain access to \$300 million in new benefits, lowering individuals' Medicare expenses by \$200-\$500/mo. MSAC's victories brought Massachusetts from federal minimum to now having the third-highest income eligibility in the nation!

LONG TERM CARE



Working with Community Catalyst and the LTSS center at UMass Boston MSAC engaged more than 1,000 seniors from across Massachusetts regarding their experiences, hopes, and fears for long-term care. Their voices will help MSAC as it determines priorities for its developing LTC campaign.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



Led by our Springfield chapter, MSAC reached out to over 4,000 voters by phone or in person in 4 languages. This effort contributed to the successful outcomes for Statewide Ballot Questions #1 and #4.

TRANSPORTATION



Engaged more than 200 transit riders across 5 communities to respond to MBTA proposed bus re-design. This resulted in saving 4 needed bus routes from elimination and improving access to healthcare.



Contact us at:
617-284-1275 or
info@
MassSeniorAction.org