

February 15, 2023

House Legislative Oversight Committee  
PO Box 11867  
Columbia, SC 29211

Dear House Legislative Oversight Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony at your upcoming committee meeting reviewing the Department on Aging. As you know, the "aging network" is made up of a triad that includes the Department on Aging, the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), and local providers throughout the state who directly provide services to seniors. I represent one of those local providers, Senior Action. Senior Action, a private nonprofit, is celebrating our 55<sup>th</sup> year in service this year and was the first in the state, and therefore, longest consecutive recipient of the funding from the Older Americans Act in 1967. I have been honored to serve as the Executive Director/CEO for the last 16 years.

The testimony that I would like to share with the committee is my organization's experience working within this triad over the years. I believe there are significant opportunities for improvement and equally significant repercussions to the seniors we serve if this is not given the attention that the seniors deserve. The testimony that I will provide will focus on three primary issues:

1. Funding allocation, contracting process, and payment,
2. Communication between the three components of the triad, and
3. Strategic planning and ensuring that the most important needs of seniors in the community are being met.

Many of these issues were raised in the Legislative Audit that was conducted in 2019. However, they have not been addressed and, I believe, have gotten worse. Long waiting lists continue to grow and the people with the least amount of time to wait are running out of time to receive services that were intended to help them thrive in their aging years.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to share with the committee. I have a great deal of hope that solutions can easily be found and improvement realized in a short amount of time.

Sincerely,



Andrea Smith, MEd  
Executive Director/CEO  
Senior Action