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## Issue Brief – Caregiver Respite Care

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DIVISION OF AGING AND ADULT SERVICES

NUMBER DHS-07-26

### **CAREGIVER RESPITE CARE**

The Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) under the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) is requesting an appropriation from General Funds of \$100,800 for respite care.

### **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the respite care program is to provide relief for the caregivers to prevent burnout and exhaustion.

### **DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

The respite care program provides relief for caregivers of elderly spouses or parents who perform demanding and exhausting tasks. Individuals do not have to be qualified for Medicaid to receive respite care services. This program has about 1,780 participants on an annual basis. The type of respite care services provided are staying with the elderly person so the caregiver can take a break, educational services, and group support meetings. In addition, supplemental services are provided to modify their home to allow the seniors to remain at home (ramps, safety bars, etc.). Typically, respite care services are provided for one year because the senior citizen dies. Occasionally, the services are extended an additional year. The annual cost of respite care and supplemental services are \$1,500 and \$300 respectively.

DAAS has been unable to provide services to 312 caregivers because of lack of funding. This funding request would allow 56 individuals access to respite care. The caregivers provide a valuable service by allowing the elderly to remain in their homes rather than in a nursing home. The annual cost of nursing homes is \$23,944 versus the average cost of respite care of \$1,800 and waiver services \$4,951 (if Medicaid eligible).

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Subcommittee may want to prioritize this request for funding of \$100,800 for respite care.