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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

February 12, 1982

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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O'DONNELL ATTACKS SENIOR CITIZEN CUTBACKS

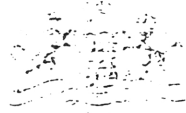
State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell, Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, today attacked Governor Thornburgh's proposed cutbacks in services for the elderly.

"The proposed budget for fiscal year 1982-1983 contains \$2.25 million of cuts in state subsidies for senior citizens' programs," O'Donnell said. "These cuts are bound to produce serious reductions in service for Philadelphia's elderly, and for some people the effects will be catastrophic."

Representative O'Donnell called the Governor's plan to shift programs from the state's general fund to the lottery fund "a fraud. This 'shift' is really an attempt to eliminate the general fund as one source of funding. Since lottery funds are already totally dedicated to supporting senior citizens' programs, this will inevitably result in further service cutbacks.

"The Governor also wants total discretion over this funding," O'Donnell said. "But I believe that the best guarantee for senior citizens is continued legislative oversight."

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

November 29, 1984

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LEGISLATURE APPROVES \$10 MILLION FOR SENIOR CENTERS

The Pennsylvania General Assembly has approved a bill that earmarks \$10 million in state lottery funds for the construction and renovation of senior center facilities.

State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell (D-Germantown), the House Majority Whip and a strong supporter of the proposal, called the bill "good news for senior citizens and senior centers across the state."

O'Donnell said the bill, which passed the House and Senate unanimously, "will make close to \$1.8 million available for senior center construction in Philadelphia. At a time when the Center for Older Adults, Northwest, and other senior centers are undertaking costly construction projects, the bill could be particularly helpful."

COA's construction work on the old Vernon Park Library building will have cost an estimated \$380,000 by the time of its completion, O'Donnell explained. The Germantown legislator said much of the improvements are still unfunded.

"The Governor has 30 days to act on this bill," O'Donnell said, "but I am extremely optimistic that he will sign it."

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

April 4, 1985

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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\$50,000 in State Lottery Funds for S.O.W.N.

Legislation to provide \$50,000 for the Supportive Older Women's Network (S.O.W.N.) in Pennsylvania was introduced in the state House by State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell (D-East Falls).

S.O.W.N. is a group self-help program for women over 60. The program first started in Northwest Philadelphia and there are now groups in Roxborough at the INTERAC Senior Center and another opening soon in Chestnut Hill.

O'Donnell said, "S.O.W.N. helps its members remain self sufficient and able to deal with the problems that older women frequently face".

"My bill will make it possible for this valuable program to be offered to more women in more locations across Pennsylvania".

Currently, almost 64% of the population 60 years old and over are women. By the year 2000 it is projected that more than two-thirds of the elderly population will be women.

O'Donnell said, "S.O.W.N. was designed to help women cope with their special aging problems. There is no better use to which we can put the State Lottery Funds".

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October 8, 1985

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Representative O'Donnell Co-Sponsors Senior Citizen Reassurance Bill

State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell (D-Germantown) co-sponsored a bill in the House that creates a state-wide, community based senior citizen telephone monitoring system to provide daily safety checks for participating elderly Pennsylvanians.

Representative O'Donnell said, "Many senior citizens in Pennsylvania live alone, without friends or relatives nearby. This program provides them with an opportunity to communicate with someone each day."

The legislation would require counties and Area Agencies on Aging to develop and operate a telephone monitoring system staffed, whenever possible, by volunteer operators. Each day senior citizens who choose to participate in the program will call the operators to report that they are having no problems.

If a participant does not call the unlisted number by a specified time each morning, the operator will attempt to contact the person by phone. If no one answers, a neighbor or a relative will be asked to make a personal safety check. When registering for the program the senior citizens designates the person who is asked to make the safety check.

Representative O'Donnell added, "This legislation is based on similar programs already operating successfully in several parts of Pennsylvania. I believe this bill merits serious consideration and prompt action. The General Assembly has a responsibility to help meet the safety needs of our older citizens."