

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Administration on Aging

Final Agenda for the 1995 White House Conference on Aging

AGENCY: White House Conference on Aging, AoA, HHS.

ACTION: Notice of final agenda.

SUMMARY: The Policy Committee on the White House Conference on Aging is publishing the final agenda for the May 1995 Conference. To formulate this final agenda, the Policy Committee used public comments received on the proposed agenda published October 12, 1994, in the **Federal Register** and recommendations emanating from several hundred pre-conference events held around the country. Part I of the final agenda is an overview of the comments received on the proposed agenda; Part II covers the Conference theme, Part III specifies the issues and subissues for which resolutions are to be developed and the structure of the Conference program; and the final section, Part IV, describes the process to be used to develop and pass resolutions at the Conference.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: White House Conference on Aging, 501 School Street, SW., 8th Floor, Washington, DC 20024-2755. The main telephone number for the Conference is (202) 245-7116 and the FAX number is (202) 245-7857. The INTERNET address (CONFERENCE@BAN-GATE.AOA.DHHS.GOV) may also be used.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Immediately after President Clinton formally called for the 1995 White House Conference on Aging (WHCoA) in February 1994, solicitation from a wide range of sources—especially from the grassroots—of suggestions and ideas for the Conference agenda began. A main source of this input has been more than 600 recognized activities, events and programs that have been held or will be held around the country as a prelude to the May Conference in Washington, DC. Other major sources have been the public comments on the proposed agenda and the letters received from States, individuals, and public and private organizations.

From the recognized events that have been held, over 300 reports have been received detailing the policy recommendations generated from the events. Input received from this variety of local, state, regional and national events conducted on behalf of the WHCoA over the past ten months points

toward an agenda that goes beyond traditional boundaries and paints a broad picture of aging—an agenda that looks at the present and the future. This Conference should examine the needs and contributions of today's and tomorrow's older citizens. The specific issues addressed by the recommendations parallel the public comments received on the proposed agenda.

The Older Americans Act Amendments of 1992, Public Law 102-375, required that the Policy Committee (which oversees the 1995 White House Conference on Aging) formulate and approve a proposed agenda for the Conference and that this proposed agenda be published in the **Federal Register** for public comment. The proposed agenda was published on October 12 and the comment period closed approximately seven weeks later on December 1. More information on the comments is provided in Part I.

The main goal of the 1995 WHCoA is to provide resolutions to influence national aging policy and to develop a blueprint for action to have these resolutions implemented. This Conference, the last one of this century, will have a major impact on aging concerns into the 21st century. To focus the impact of the WHCoA on those issues of overwhelming concern, the number of resolutions presented to the Conference delegates for passage will be limited. The process for development and passage of resolutions is described in Part IV.

Part I. Comments on the Proposed Agenda

This part of the final agenda provides information on the comments received on the proposed agenda published in the **Federal Register**. The proposed agenda included four proposed themes for the Conference from which a final theme would emerge based primarily on public comments and a listing of major issues and subissues.

Written comments on the proposed agenda formulated and approved by the Policy Committee were received from 915 individuals and organizations. Fifty-nine percent of the comments came from individuals, many of them older citizens.

Approximately one-half of the commenters responded to the request for comments on a theme for the Conference. They indicated their preferences among the four proposed themes, combined elements of the four proposed themes or proposed different themes. The responses tabulated as follows:

| Themes | Re-sponses |
|--|------------|
| “Aging into the 21st Century: Generations Working Together for a Better Community” | 89 |
| “Investing in an Aging Society into the 21st Century: Independence, Opportunity and Dignity for All Americans” | 42 |
| “Investing Now in America's Future: A Lifetime of Productivity and Opportunity” | 52 |
| “America Now and into the 21st Century: Growing Older with Independence, Opportunity and Dignity” | 163 |
| Other (combined elements or proposed new theme) | 108 |

Comments focused on the need to look ahead to the future, the interdependence among generations, the importance of maintaining independence and dignity as one ages and the options and opportunities that need to be present throughout life.

In the proposed agenda published in the **Federal Register**, commenters were asked to indicate the relative importance of the issues and subissues and to provide on how they might be linked. The comments received provided information on the specific issue or issues which were of paramount concern to commenters or their organizations. The tabulation of responses on the 19 issues listed in the proposed agenda for the Conference resulted in the following rank order of the issues:

1. Health.
2. Income security and other benefits.
3. Housing/social and community services.
4. Crime/personal safety.
5. Interdependence of generations.
6. Quality of life/meaning in later years.
7. Special constituencies.
8. Productive older people.
9. Employment.
10. Older Americans Act and its role.
11. Transportation.
12. Rights/responsibility/advocacy Arts and humanities.
13. Image of older people.
14. Research and education/training.
15. Cultural diversity.
16. Family and family life.
17. Role of the private sector.
18. Technology.

“Health” was an overwhelming concern of the commenters. The “health” issue received more than twice as many comments as the second ranked issue, “Income security and other benefits.” Another common concern of the commenters was combining housing and social and community services.

Many commenters thought housing issues should be considered separately from services.

Numerous commenters were concerned about the number of issues covered in the proposed agenda and the ability of delegates to deal with this vast array of issues. These commenters suggested limiting the number of issues to be addressed at the Conference to those considered most pressing and provided guidance on the issues they thought met this criterion. There were a number of very thoughtful letters suggesting how the issues and subissues could be linked both for discussion and for development of resolutions at the Conference.

Part II. Conference Theme

The Policy Committee decided on a theme that combined aspects of the two top-ranked proposed themes. The theme for the Conference is: "America Now and into the 21st Century: Generations Aging Together with Independence, Opportunity and Dignity."

Part III. Issues To Be Addressed at the Conference and the Structure of the Conference Program

This part of the notice addresses both the issues to be covered in the final agenda and the structure of the Conference program in which the issues are to be discussed and resolutions passed.

After considerable deliberation, the Policy Committee narrowed the focus of the Conference to four issues with several cross-cutting concerns which are to permeate both the discussion of the issues and the resolutions process. In the view of the members of the Policy Committee, these four issues are the ones considered most pressing and critical to aging policy based on the comments received on the proposed agenda and the recommendations generated by pre-conference events.

The attention to be focused on these four issues does not deny the importance of other issues and subissues included in the proposed agenda. However, the Policy Committee agreed with commenters that it would not be possible to cover adequately all these issues within the context of a three day conference and they made the decision to concentrate on core issues.

The list below specifies the four issues and the subissues to be covered under each issue. For each issue, cross-cutting concerns are repeated to emphasize their importance to the discussion of each issue. In addition, the relevant current Federal programs are named for each issue.

The four major issues and subissues determined by the Policy Committee are:

Assuring Comprehensive Health Care Including Long-Term Care

- Promotion and prevention.
- Access to quality care.
- Continuum of care intergrating community and social services.
- Medicare/Medicaid/Older Americans Act.
- Research and education.

Cross-cutting concerns:

Interdependence among generations and among members of extended families, and the responsibility of individuals to plan for changes that will occur throughout their lifespan; Unique contributions and needs of special populations, especially veterans, caregivers (including grandparents), rural elderly, women, minorities and individuals with disabilities

Current Federal programs: Medicare (Title XVIII of the Social Security Act), Medicaid (Title XIX of the Social Security Act), Older Americans Act, Veterans Health Benefits (Chapter 17, Title 38), Social Services Block Grant, food stamps, NIH programs

Promoting Economic Security

- Employment.
- Social Security.
- Other retirement income and resources, including pension reform.
- Poverty and hunger.
- Tax policy.
- Discrimination.

Cross-cutting concerns:

Interdependence among generations and among members of extended families, and the responsibility of individuals to plan for changes that will occur throughout their lifespan; Unique contributions and needs of special populations, especially veterans, caregivers (including grandparents), rural elderly, women, minorities and individuals with disabilities

Current Federal programs: Social Security (Title II of the Social Security Act: Old-age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance Benefits), Supplemental Security Income (Title XVI of the Social Security Act: Supplemental Security Income for the Aged, Blind and Disabled), Older Americans Act, Veterans Compensation and Pensions (Chapter 11, Title 38), vocational rehabilitation, adult education, Job Training Partnership Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act,

Employment Retirement Income Security Act

Maximizing Housing and Support Service Options

- Range of options/availability.
- Affordability/financing/tax policies.
- Linking support services to housing.
- Consumer choice/decision-making/promoting independence.

Cross-cutting concerns:

Interdependence among generations and among members of extended families, and the responsibility of individuals to plan for changes that will occur throughout their lifespan; Unique contributions and needs of special populations, especially veterans, caregivers (including grandparents), rural elderly, women, minorities and individuals with disabilities

Current Federal programs: Public and Indian housing; section 202, Capital Advances for Housing the Elderly and section 811, Housing for the Disabled; section 231, Mortgage Insurance for Housing the Elderly; section 221(d) (3) and (4), Mortgage Insurance for Nursing Homes, Intermediate Care Facilities, and Board and Care Homes; section 236, Mortgage Interest Reduction Payments; Congregate Housing Services Program; Flexible Subsidy and Loan Management Set-aside Funding; Manufactured Home Parks; Home Equity Conversion Mortgage Insurance Demonstration; section 8, Rental Certificates and Rental Vouchers; Home Investment Partnership; Emergency Shelter Grants Program; Supportive Housing Demonstration Program; Farmers Home Administration housing; low-income home energy assistance; Community Service Block Grant; Community Development Block Grant; VA home loan programs (Chapter 37, Title 38)

Maximizing Options for a Quality Life

- Resources for elders (community and social services/activities).
- Crime, personal safety and elder abuse.
- Spiritual well-being, ethics, values and roles.
- Image and roles of older people.
- Elders as resources and opportunities for volunteering.
- Isolation and loneliness.
- Legal issues.

Cross-cutting concerns:

Interdependence among generations and among members of extended

families, and the responsibility of individuals to plan for changes that will occur throughout their lifespan; Unique contributions and needs of special populations, especially veterans, caregivers (including grandparents), rural elderly, women, minorities and individuals with disabilities

Current Federal programs: Older Americans Act, Social Services Block Grant, National Senior Service Corps, Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994

Background papers on these issues will be provided to delegates in advance of the Conference to allow them to prepare for and actively participate in the Conference.

To develop a structure for the Conference program, the Policy Committee was guided by the following principles:

- Each delegate shall have an opportunity to participate in discussion/resolution development of several issues so that he/she can see the interrelationships among the issues;
- These opportunities shall be provided in smaller group settings of delegates;
- At least three hours are needed for substantive discussion of an issue; and
- Time and space shall be provided for caucuses by special constituencies/populations.

Based on these principles, the following structure for the Conference evolved:

| Date and time | Activity |
|--|--|
| Tuesday, May 2— 7:00 p.m.–? | Brief opening/speak out. |
| Wednesday, May 3: 9:00 a.m.– 11:00a.m. | Formal opening session. |
| 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. | Special constituency caucuses. |
| 2:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. | First issue resolution development session. |
| Evening | Delegates on their own. |
| Thursday, May 4: 8:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m. | Second issue resolution development session. |
| Noon–1:00 p.m. | Special constituency caucuses. |
| 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m. | Third issue resolution development session. |
| 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m. | Special constituency caucuses. |
| Evening | Plenary session (tentative). |
| Friday, May 5: 7:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m. | Initial voting to determine the 40 priority resolutions. |

| Date and time | Activity |
|-----------------------|---|
| 10:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m. | Plenary session to adopt the 40 priority resolutions and consider delegate resolutions. |
| 11:30 a.m.–Noon | Closing session. |

Each delegate will have the opportunity to participate in three issue resolution development sessions. All four issues and subissues are to be offered concurrently at each of the three issue resolution sessions. More specific information on the Conference program will be provided to delegates in March and April. Delegates will be asked to indicate preferences among the four issues for participation in three issue resolution development sessions. Every effort will be made to accommodate delegates' preferences.

Part IV. Conference Resolutions Process

This section of the final agenda for the Conference will discuss the process to be used for development and passage of resolutions. A major outcome of any White House Conference is a series of recommendations or resolutions for the development of future policy.

The Policy Committee decided to concentrate the attention of the delegates on a limited number of resolutions. This action was taken to avoid the experience of past White House Conferences from which large numbers of recommendations were produced. The Policy Committee recognizes that the importance of recommendations as guidance for setting policy is diminished when the Conference delegates pass hundreds of recommendations for action.

There will be two avenues for the introduction of resolutions to the Conference delegates. Described below is the first avenue, which begins with the pre-conference events and continues through the three issue resolution development sessions in which each delegate will participate. The Policy Committee has decided that this process will result in passage of no more than 40 resolutions by the Conference delegates.

The second avenue for the introduction of resolutions is by delegates at the Conference. To be voted on by the delegates on Friday morning, a resolution must have the signatures of at least 10% of the delegates by midnight Thursday. These resolutions will be in addition to the 40 resolutions generated by the issue resolution development sessions.

The recommendations generated by pre-conference events will provide the

basis for development of Conference resolutions in each of the four issue areas. An Issue Resolution Steering Committee for each issue, composed of recognized experts on the issue and several Policy and Advisory Committee members, will review the relevant pre-conference recommendations to produce a series of resolutions to be considered by the delegates.

The White House Conference on Aging is looking for resolutions which are substantive and can be translated into action at the various levels of government and/or in the private sector. The Policy Committee, therefore, encourages resolutions, to the extent possible, that are structured to include information which addresses:

- Availability (scope of services, level of providers, settings);
- Quality (processes and outcomes);
- Access (affordability, physical access and transportation);
- Responsibility (individual/government, public/private, Federal/State/local); and
- Cost (savings/financing, benefit).

Draft resolutions for each of the issues will be sent to delegates several weeks before the Conference for their review. Delegates will have the opportunity to review the resolutions and come to the Conference prepared to offer suggestions, modifications or new resolutions for consideration. The draft resolutions will serve to initiate discussion in the issue resolution development sessions on Wednesday and Thursday. The Issue Resolution Steering Committee for each issue will review and consolidate the resolutions from each of its issue resolution development sessions. There could be as many as 50 sessions on a single issue.

A revised set of resolutions will be presented to the delegates for review before voting on Friday morning. This revised set will include resolutions introduced through both avenues, pre-conference recommendations and delegates at the Conference.

The Policy Committee is investigating ways in which delegates may vote individually on resolutions Friday morning before the plenary session begins. This voting process would be used to allow delegates to determine resolutions to be brought to the plenary session. A simple majority will be required for passage of resolutions at the plenary session.

Dated: January 26, 1995.

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