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Governor Scott's Securing Florida's Future Budget to Support Florida Elders and Families

TALLAHASSEE – Governor Rick Scott's 2018-19 Securing Florida's Future budget recommends \$12.5 million for the Florida Department of Elder Affairs to serve more than 1,100 elders in need, invest in programs that support Florida families affected by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and make necessary changes to outdated technology that will enable Florida's Aging Network better serve seniors and their caregivers.

Governor Rick Scott said, "Florida is proud that so many elders are choosing to call our state home and we are fully committed to providing them with the services and support they need. These important investments are essential to helping our elders remain healthy, safe, and independent so they, and their families, can continue to enjoy our great state."

Governor Scott's Securing Florida's Future Budget includes:

- \$3 million to provide services for additional elders with Alzheimer's disease and relief for their caregivers through the Alzheimer's Disease Initiative (ADI);
- \$5 million for home and community-based services for more seniors at risk for nursing home placement through the Community Care for the Elderly Program (CCE);
- \$1 million to provide services for more of the frailest individuals through the Home Care for the Elderly Program (HCE);
- \$2.65 million to improve the Department's client assessment processes and technology, including replacement of the 26-year-old Client Information and Registration Tracking System (CIRTS); and
- \$876,000 for the Aging and Disability Resource Centers to assess needs and provide services to elders across Florida.

Department of Elder Affairs Secretary Jeffrey Bragg said, "With the highest percentage of elders in the nation, we must continue to set an example by investing in essential home and community-based services that best meet their needs. I am so grateful for the leadership and support of Governor Scott in providing these increases year after year – more than \$163 million since 2011 – and for his commitment to serving Florida's 5.2 million seniors."

Jaime Estremera-Fitzgerald, Chief Executive Officer of the Area Agency on Aging for Palm Beach/Treasure Coast, Inc. and Vice President of the Florida Association of Area Agencies on Aging (F4A), said, "I am very thankful to Governor Scott for his support and

investments in these programs that are vital for frail elders in Florida and allows us to help them maintain their health and independence in their own homes and communities.”

Debbie Moroney, ACSW, CEO, Alzheimer’s Project, Inc., said, “ADI is such an important program that supports caregivers and those with Alzheimer’s disease in Florida. Governor Scott has once again recognized the critical need for respite services for the selfless caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer’s disease. They need our continued support, and I applaud the Governor for his continued support of our efforts.”

Lisa Bretz, MSW, Executive Director, Area Agency on Aging for North Florida, said, “Through this increased funding for Aging and Disability Resource Centers, Governor Scott has shown his support for our organizations in our mission to promote the independence, dignity, health, and well-being of seniors and their caregivers, and we applaud him for providing this funding for us again.”

Andrea V. Busada, President of the Board of Directors, Florida Association of Aging Services Providers (FASP), said, “We are extremely pleased with the Governor’s continued commitment to enhancing the tools and technology at the Department of Elder Affairs which will allow service providers to more effectively serve our seniors.”

For more information about the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, visit www.elderaffairs.org.

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The Department of Elder Affairs, the State Unit on Aging, helps Florida’s elders to remain healthy, safe, and independent. For more information, please visit elderaffairs.org