



Seniors

Georgia's senior citizens are a tremendous asset to our state. As the group of Georgians more likely to cast a ballot than any other, seniors anchor our civic engagement efforts. Whether by virtue of their wealth of experience in our state's diverse workforce or the volunteer leadership they provide for our community organizations, seniors are integral to building thriving communities in every region of Georgia.

As Georgia's population of seniors grows at a faster rate than any of our neighboring states outside of Florida,¹ Stacey Abrams believes that we bear a special responsibility to ensure that our seniors can meet their needs, whether it be healthcare, aging in place, or easily accessing transport to get where they need to go.

Stacey recognizes the service rendered by Georgia's seniors in their earlier years and the numerous ways in which they continue to guide and enrich our communities. In supporting healthy and productive lives for our seniors, not only does our state show its gratitude and fulfill its responsibility to our seniors, but also our communities benefit immensely in the process.

As House Democratic Leader, Stacey Abrams championed issues of high significance to seniors. She co-sponsored legislation to improve the lives of seniors through:

- Expanded supports for grandparents raising grandchildren. (HR 474 in 2015; HB 887 in 2016; HB 961 in 2016; HB 962 in 2016; HB 331 in 2017)
- Protections against elder abuse (HB 78 in 2013; HB 72 in 2015)
- Stronger commitment to our veterans (various bills in the Abrams-led "Promise Kept" Initiative)

Additionally, she beat back efforts to reapply the sales tax to the purchase of groceries.

As Governor, Stacey will work to ensure that Georgia is a place where our seniors can access the same quality of life as any other Georgian. Under her leadership, Georgia will:

1. **Help more seniors age in place.** We will strengthen the state's commitment to the Aging and Disability Resource Centers, which offer critical connections between seniors and community services. Additionally, we will devote resources to the Community Care Services program and Home and Community Based Service program to cut wait times and waitlists for services such as home health aides, delivered meals, and personal care needs.

¹ <https://aging.georgia.gov/sites/aging.georgia.gov/files/JTF2017.pdf>

2. **Increase access to transportation.** We will champion more reliable, efficient non-emergency medical transportation to ensure seniors and others can get to their medical appointments. Additionally, we will promote local efforts to launch volunteer driver programs.
3. **Expand insurance options for younger seniors and increase access to assisted living.** We will expand Medicaid to help seniors who have not reached Medicare-age, namely, seniors who have lost their job or work in jobs that do not offer health coverage. We must help insure all seniors. Additionally, we will expand Medicaid to meet the assisted living needs of more seniors.
4. **Support caregivers and promote brain health research and awareness.** With more than 140,000 seniors living with Alzheimer's and 500,000 Georgians caring for them, brain health must be at the forefront of our efforts as a state going forward. Georgia's research community has identified brain health and Alzheimer's research as opportunities for us to lead the nation. We will coordinate state resources with research and service partners to improve the lives of those afflicted by Alzheimer's, support their caregivers, and broaden awareness.
5. **Assist local efforts to increase affordable housing.** We will create a state housing affordable trust fund and support technical assistance through the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing.
6. **Advance Georgia's mental health network.** Through Medicaid expansion and telehealth initiatives, Georgia can ensure greater access and affordability of mental health services. We support a vision of mental health services integrated with primary care.
7. **Foster continued collaboration through the Older Adults Cabinet.** Georgia's Older Adults Cabinet has provided cross-sector collaboration among state agencies, providers, and nonprofits to address the challenges facing seniors, and we will continue to support the Cabinet's work.