



**House Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services
Mi-Choice Waiver Testimony
April 8, 2019**

The Honorable Representative Whiteford and members of the Committee, my name is Ryan Cowmeadow and I am the executive director of the Area Agencies on Aging Association of Michigan. The Association represents the 16 Area Agencies on Aging serving older adults and adults with disabilities from Adrian to Zilwaukee and everywhere in-between. In addition to providing Older Americans Act, and Older Michiganiaan's Act services, 14 of our 16 members are also Mi-Choice Medicaid Waiver Agents.

For the last several decades, all 50 states have been shifting the ways in which they spend their Medicaid Long-Term Services and Supports dollars. This shift from Long-term care (LTC) provided in an institutionalized setting to LTC provided in the community through Medicaid Waivers programs such as MI-Choice program is known as rebalancing.

In general, states work to rebalance their Medicaid LTC spending for 2 main reasons:

- First and most importantly, to allow older and disabled adults to have choice in where they receive their long-term care and support, and from whom they receive it,
- and, second, to produce savings over more costly Medicaid institutional care.

Michigan has made progress in recent years toward a more rebalanced long-term care system. However, according to the 2018 Across the States Report, Michigan still ranks 46th in the nation for the percent of Medicaid Long-Term Services and Supports spent on Home and Community Based Services.

Nationally states spend on average 57% of their Medicaid long-term services and supports funding on home and community-based service programs, whereas Michigan spends only 40%¹.

Home and Community Based Services such as the MI-Choice Waiver are required by CMS to provide person-centered care with high network adequacy standards at costs less than providing services in an institution².

The MI-Choice Medicaid Waiver program is a shining example of a what a Home and Community Based Service program can be:

¹ Across the States: Profiles of Long-Term Services and Supports (2018) AARP

² <http://www.ncsl.org/research/health/medicaid-waivers-in-the-states-seven-faqs.aspx>