

**Minutes from the Policy Committee Meeting
2005 White House Conference on Aging
Wednesday, July 14, 2004
Washington Court Hotel, Washington, D.C.**

Participants:

Policy Committee Members:

Dorcas R. Hardy, Chairman
Alejandro Aparicio, M.D.
Robert Blancato
Senator Larry Craig
Clayton Fong
Gail Hunt
Barbara Kennelly
Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon
Congressman E. Clay Shaw
Melvin L. Woods

Policy Committee Member Representatives:

Josefina Carbonnell, Assistant Secretary for Aging, DHHS, for Secretary
Thompson
Justine Handelman for Scott Serota
Scott Keller for Secretary Alphonso Jackson
Thomas Edes, M.D., for Secretary Principi
Mike Woody for Senator Harkin
Steve Robinson for Senator Grassley

Others:

Alex Azar, General Counsel, DHHS
Ann McGee, Director, White House Conference on Aging
Nora Andrews, Senior Executive Officer, Policy Committee

Policy Committee Chairman, Dorcas R. Hardy, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed the Policy Committee. Approximately 40 members of the public attended.

Swearing In of Public Members:

The Oath of Office was administered by Alex Azar, Health and Human Services (HHS) General Counsel, and chief legal advisor for Secretary Tommy G. Thompson. Mr. Azar provided brief comments and welcomed and thanked the Committee for their important services to the White House Conference on Aging (WHCOA). He thanked the Assistant

Secretary for Aging, Josefina Carbonell, for her leadership and direction for the White House Conference on Aging.

The 2005 White House Conference on Aging: A Vision:

Chairman Hardy introduced Assistant Secretary Carbonell, who presented greetings from HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson, and read a letter from him to the Policy Committee, in which he stated that the White House Conference on Aging is an influential and visionary catalyst for aging policy that addresses both today's and tomorrow's anticipated issues.

Assistant Secretary Carbonell then gave remarks outlining the Strategic Plan for the Administration on Aging (AoA), and a vision for the WHCOA that would include the following elements.

- Planning Along the Lifespan
- Employment
- Environmental
- Health and Long Term Living
- Social Engagement
- Marketplace

Response and remarks from Policy Committee Members:

The Chairman entertained comments from the Committee. The discussion touched on several areas that should be considered in developing an agenda for the Conference.

- Reach out to a broad audience, including the general public, Congress, policy makers, and the free market, as well as the traditional organizations focused on the elderly.
- Recommend policies that can be implemented.
- Focus on "aging" not just the "aged."
- Consider intergenerational aspects.
- Explore the marketplace, as well as the role of government in addressing issues.
- Address upcoming issues and challenges which will be presented by Baby Boomers.
- Consider access to health care, including a focus on prevention and evidence-based practices, as well as cultural competencies, caregivers and transportation.
- Focus on promoting and sustaining maximum independence as people age, especially as relates to home-based care.

The Chairman entertained comments from audience, and the following issues were raised:

- Nutrition
- Respite care

- Volunteerism
- Safe roadways and walkways; competency of older drivers
- Mental health needs
- Rural issues

The Chairman indicated the next meeting of the Policy Committee will be in approximately 90 days. She also stated her intent to hold listening sessions, beginning with the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations, and invited Policy Committee members to participate as availability permits.

The “Aging” – Today and Tomorrow

The Chairman gave a presentation outlining important demographic and economic data that described who the aging are today and how that will change over the next ten years. The Chairman indicated she hoped this helped set a framework for the Conference and its agenda. She emphasized the importance of trying to be ahead of the curve, in 2012 and 2015, when society will all look and be a great deal older.

A brief discussion followed the presentation. The Committee agreed that its role must be to keep a strong focus on the future and resist temptation and pressure to only address issues considered important today.

The Conference

Dr. Ann McGee, Executive Director, gave greetings and expressed appreciation for participation of the Committee members. The group was given options for Conference dates (October 23-26, 2005), and locations, as well as pre-Conference events. Dr. McGee presented a draft communication for Designation of White House Conference on Aging events and asked that the Committee take time to consider it and provide comments. She also presented a listing of possible considerations for delegate selection and stated that delegate selection must be made in consideration of available funds. She discussed the possible use of technology to enhance the number of participants. A budget breakdown was presented: \$50,941 was left over from 1995 WHCOA, \$2.8 million in FY04 funds are good through FY06, and another \$4.6 million pending in anticipated appropriations for FY05. Dr. McGee discussed that the gift authority allows the WHCOA to accept gifts, but gifts cannot be actively solicited

Following Dr. McGee’s presentation the committee discussed feasibility of holding the Conference outside Washington, D.C. There was general agreement that the Conference should be held in Washington, D.C., with opportunities to reach outside the “beltway” through pre-conference events.

Ethics Training

The non-Federal members of the Policy Committee participated in Ethics Training presented by Mr. Stanley Olesh, the Department Ethics Counsel.

Charge to Subcommittees and Subcommittee Meetings

Policy Committee members indicated their subcommittee interests, as follows:

Health Chairman: Serota

Aparicio
Blancato
Senator Grassley
Hunt
Principi
Senator Reid

Support Services Chairman: Fong

Aparicio
Hunt
Principi
Woods

Finance/Economic/Security Chairman: Senator Craig

Blancato
Senator Grassley
Kennelly
Woods

Instead of dividing into separate subcommittee meetings, the Policy Committee continued to meet in full and discuss possible issue areas associated with the six broad vision topics identified by Assistant Secretary Carbonnell during her presentation earlier. Before the next meeting subcommittees will refine the list of issues as a first step toward planning the Conference agenda

The Committee identified possible themes for the conference:

Changing Face of Longevity
Aging Today and Tomorrow
From Awareness to Action
Aging in America's Future

The Committee discussed formation and use of the Advisory Committee. It was agreed that members first would make recommendations about the types of expertise that would be needed on the Advisory Committee, in consideration of issue areas identified in Attachment 1. Once these expertise areas are identified, the Policy Committee can proceed to develop specific recommendations of individuals to serve.

Full Committee Wrap-up

Summary of Policy Committee Assignments from the Chair:

- 1) Review bios and let Chairman know if changes are needed.
- 2) Look at proposed meeting dates and advise the Chairman of availability.
- 3) Subcommittee topic items to be further discussed and refined.

- 4) Suggest no more than 3 individuals (with bios or types of individuals) for possible nomination to Advisory Committee. Submit to Chairman no later than August 1, 2004. (This deadline was later revised by the Chairman pending further discussion and Conference agenda formulation.)

The final action of the day was to vote on date and location of 2005 White House Conference on Aging. The unanimous vote was **October 23-26, 2005** in **Washington, D.C.** at a location to be announced.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:00.

/s/
Dorcas R. Hardy
Chairman

Attachment: Remarks of Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon

Attachment 1

Remarks of Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon
Policy Committee Meeting
White House Conference on Aging
July 14, 2004

I am very pleased to join you all today for this inaugural meeting of the Policy Committee of the 2005 White House Conference on Aging. It is my distinct honor and pleasure to have been chosen to serve on this Conference with some of the country's most distinguished public servants and experts in the fields of health care, social security and retirement. I am humbled to sit among you to report back our findings to the President and Congress on these important issues.

Since 1961, the Conference has been a critical tool for government to address the various, and oftentimes, complicated issues surrounding senior citizens in America. Each time over the last half century, the Conference has had to conquer new challenges, overcome new obstacles and work to find new and successful solutions. Today, we find another unique set of circumstances: the baby boomer generation approaching retirement and a Social Security system possibly facing insolvency.

The answers are far from simple.

Personally, it is my vision to see this Conference study the Social Security system, as it will need some reform over the course of the next few years. I also hope that the Conference takes a deeper look into the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act, which I sponsored in 2000. I would also like to examine various provisions of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003, which is beginning to provide various benefits to seniors.

I am happy to see that my friend and colleague, Congressman Clay Shaw, the Chairman of the Social Security Subcommittee, is also serving on this Conference. Chairman Shaw understands my interest in Social Security reform, specifically in the repeal of two provisions of Social Security law: the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). These provisions can significantly reduce the Social Security benefits of many public servants, including firefighters, police officers, teachers and other public sector workers who, throughout the course of their career, worked in jobs that paid into both a Social Security benefit and a benefit from a Social Security substitute, such as a state pension plan.

It is also vital that we continue to support a strong reauthorization of the Older Americans Act and other federal programs that assist senior citizens in obtaining nutritional assistance, disease prevention and employment. We should keep building on the reforms passed in 2000 that increased flexibility, reduced bureaucracy, focused programs on the neediest senior citizens and created a new family caregiver program that provides grants

to states for such services as counseling, training, support groups, respite care, informational assistance and supplemental services.

The Medicare prescription drug bill, which was signed into law late last year, brought about the largest reform of the Medicare system since its inception. The steadily rising costs of medicines have caused many seniors to have to make a choice between paying for their prescription drugs or buying food. This law established several programs to ensure that low-income seniors no longer have to make that choice. Never before, in the history of this great country, has Congress passed legislation, which will provide more medical benefits to seniors and I am committed to see it fully implemented. By dealing with these other issues, I firmly believe that we will ensure that current and future seniors have a secure retirement.

It would be my sincerest hope and desire to attack these issues head on throughout the course of the White House Conference on Aging.

Once again, it is my deepest pleasure to serve with all of you and I thank you for the opportunity to share my vision with you today.