

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**FRANKLIN COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS ENDORSE,
ANNOUNCE BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR ISSUE #56**
Franklin County Senior Options Levy

Today, a bipartisan team of Franklin County Elected Officials, led by Commissioner Marilyn Brown, announced their support of Issue #56, the Franklin County Senior Options Levy.

This year marks the 20th year of providing successful levy-funded programming for Franklin County seniors and their caregivers.

2010 census data indicates that Franklin County has the highest percentage in the state of those age 65 years and over who still live at home. Without the services provided by the Franklin County Senior Options programs, many seniors would not be able to live independently in their own homes. Levy funding supports over 135 local agencies, organizations, businesses and non-profits; employing over 4,500 people, and, on average, over 55,000 people benefit annually from levy programs.

The senior population in Franklin County is expected to grow by as much as 33 percent this decade, increasing the demand for these services. "Last year, programs supported by the Senior Options Levy provided services to 7,000 seniors in our community, more than 56,000 older adults in 2011," said Commissioner Paula Brooks. "This levy saves tax dollars and provides jobs for over 4,500 people as well, who are employed serving our seniors. It is an all around good return on taxpayer investment."

Just over four-percent (4.1%) of State residents age 60 and over are in institutional care compared with Franklin County's 3.2-percent, the lowest of any county in the state. "Because of the Senior Options Levy, Franklin County is the best in the state at keeping seniors in their homes," said Commissioner Marilyn Brown. "That's exactly why I invited my colleagues in County Government, regardless of their political views, to join me to encourage all residents to vote FOR issue 56 now or on Election Day."

Approximately 4,000 calls per month come in to the central access point to inquire on services offered such as home delivered meals, personal care, adult day health care, transportation and minor home repair to area seniors.

This year alone, funding from the senior services levy is anticipated to provide:

- Over 550,000 home delivered meals

- Over 1,300,000 miles of transportation
- Over 18,000 days of adult day health care, which will include over 1,000 baths for very frail seniors, whose family members could not bathe them at home

“Making it possible for seniors to age at home is cost efficient, too,” said Commissioner John O’Grady. “It costs roughly six times as much to provide services for a senior in an institutional setting than it does for a client in Franklin County’s Senior Options program.”

The estimated cost in Columbus for a semi-private room in an institutional setting is \$6,083 roughly six times as much as the services provided 5 days-a-week to a client (not Medicaid eligible) with similar impairment in the Senior Options program. It costs Franklin County \$1,081 a month to provide similar services to a Senior Options client.

Franklin County’s Office on Aging has experienced a loss of revenue as a result of the accelerated elimination of Tangible Personal Property Tax, the decrease of property values in Franklin County and decreased funding from other sources.

The 1.3 mill levy replace and increase the existing 0.9 mill levy set to expire at the end of this year. The proposed levy will cost the homeowner of a \$100,000 home \$39.81 a year or, 11 cents per day, and will assure the continuation of these services for current participants and provide the ability to serve more of the growing number of seniors who will need the services over the next five years.

Editor’s note: ENDORSEMENT - ISSUE 56 - NOVEMBER 6, 2012 BALLOT which includes the bipartisan list of endorsing office holders can be found [here](#).

The Franklin County Auditor and Treasurer have both indicated that they do not endorse for or against any levy issue, as the Auditor’s office is responsible for assessing property value (on which the tax would be based) and the Treasurer’s office is responsible for collecting tax payments. Both offices have this as a long-standing policy to avoid even an appearance of conflict of interest.