



*Empowering Older Vermonters Through Advocacy and Education*

House Committee on Appropriations

February 19, 2020

Ruby Baker, Executive Director

Community of Vermont Elders (COVE)

-Our mission is to promote and protect quality of life for Vermonters as we age through dialogue, education, advocacy, and empowerment. We are here in the State House to be a voice for older Vermonters across the state.

-We ask that you consider an increase to Choices for Care Home- and Community-Based Services which is an essential program that provides person centered care to our most vulnerable older neighbors. We question an underutilization decrease (as proposed) to this program, as there is an active waitlist for the moderate needs group, and request that you consider a reallocation of funds within Choices for Care to address this waitlist.

-COVE supports the governor's recommend that maintains the LIHEAP program, and ask only that the committee help ensure that the proposed increase is directed to participants to maintain purchasing power, and not to administrative overhead.

-We urge the committee to monitor the status of the 3Squares program to ensure that the state responds to any federal cuts to this program, which plays a vital role in keeping Vermonters healthy.

-Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about these or other programs relating to older Vermonters.