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## **BLUEPRINT FOR AGING TO HOST SENIOR SUMMIT**

**Washtenaw County, MI** – In a recent poll conducted by the Blueprint for Aging, nearly half of the over 450 older adult respondents indicated that education to government leaders about the needs and preferences of seniors is an important priority. In response to this, the Blueprint for Aging, a coalition of community members and representatives from over 40 public, private and nonprofit organizations, is hosting a Senior Advocacy Summit at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital’s Senior Health Building on November 4<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. with registration beginning at 8:00 a.m. Guest speakers include Congressman John Dingell and Congressman Joe Schwarz. The gathering will include formal addresses as well as informal discussion over a complimentary light lunch. Registration is free, and those interested are asked to RSVP to Scott Layher, Advocacy Coordinator.

“The Blueprint for Aging has spoken to hundreds and hundreds of people in this county via focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and town hall meetings,” says Scott Layher, Advocacy Coordinator for the Blueprint. “We hear over and over again from older adults that they have concerns about everything from affording prescriptions drugs to finding help in order to stay in their homes. They don’t always feel decision makers hear these concerns. The Senior Advocacy Summit is an opportunity to ensure that the voices of seniors in Washtenaw County are heard and to open up dialogue between seniors and those elected to represent them.”

The Blueprint for Aging is working to assist Washtenaw County in becoming more responsive to its older residents by engaging the county in a strategic planning process that will carry the county through the next several years. The Blueprint’s vision

## Blueprint for Aging

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for Washtenaw County is a community with people invested in the care of older persons and engaged and outspoken in supporting their health, wellness, and independence.

The Blueprint for Aging is an integral part of Community Partnerships for Older Adults (CPFOA) - a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, one of 11 projects nationwide selected from a field of 486 applicants to receive a planning grant in 2004. The Blueprint for Aging is also endorsed by the Washtenaw County Human Services Community and has received major support from the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation.

For more information about the Senior Advocacy Summit and to RSVP, contact Scott Layher, Advocacy Coordinator at 734-712-3625 or [slayher@csswashtenaw.org](mailto:slayher@csswashtenaw.org). For more information about the Blueprint for Aging, contact Dana Bright, Project Manager at 734/712-3625 or [dbright@csswashtenaw.org](mailto:dbright@csswashtenaw.org).

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