



# Leadership Council of Aging Organizations

*Debra B. Whitman, Chair*

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Nora Super  
Executive Director  
2015 White House Conference on Aging  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Via email: [nora.super@whaging.gov](mailto:nora.super@whaging.gov)

Dear Nora:

As you know, the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) wrote to you as you began your organizing efforts last Fall, suggesting areas of focus within the four themes of the 2015 White House Conference on Aging (WHCoA). We appreciate you working with us during the events leading up to the Conference to gather our members' input.

Subsequently, LCAO's Work Group on the WHCoA has developed more specific policy recommendations relating to the four topics. In anticipation of the upcoming regional meetings, we would like to share the recommendations for future public policies which could be implemented in each theme area relating to: Elder Justice, Retirement Security, Healthy Aging and Long Term Services and Supports. If policy makers were able to implement these recommendations, we believe these changes would significantly enhance the well-being of America's older population. We hope these suggestions can provide concrete ideas to discuss as we continue the dialogue around the future of aging in the United States.

The Work Group has two documents for your consideration. The first is the LCAO Priority Policy Recommendations, and the second is the LCAO WHCoA Work Group Policy Catalog. The Priority Policy Recommendations are prioritized by LCAO from the larger policy ideas catalog. These 26 priority recommendations are listed in ranked order within each of the theme issue areas based upon the votes of LCAO members.

The Policy Catalog includes many more recommendations in these areas that LCAO members have suggested and that we hope you or other interested parties will consider as you look for ways to prepare to meet the needs of an aging population. As you know, by 2030 more than 70 million Americans will be 65 and older.

An overarching frame to all these recommendations is the need to recognize that older Americans are growing ever more diverse. Therefore, careful attention to implementing public policies in a culturally competent manner is needed. It is often necessary to be able to identify and address the needs of a particular group within the larger pool of all constituents if we are to meet the needs of all aging people. To be successful in that goal, as public policy changes are made, they need to be designed and implemented with cultural competence. LCAO members stand ready to assist in those efforts.

One of the members of LCAO, Services and Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Elders (SAGE), provided a particularly helpful definition from the National Resource Center of the three dimensions of cultural competency. These include: cultural awareness (being knowledgeable about what a person typically experiences when accessing—or thinking about accessing—services), cultural humility (no matter how much we learn about or become aware of a culture, each individual is the expert on their own experience), and cultural responsiveness (learning new patterns of behavior and effectively applying them individually and within the organization's setting). These three elements need to be present as policy makers implement policy changes for all groups of individuals if we are to have the inclusive, strong society we seek.

Thank you for your consideration. If we can provide any further information and background about these suggestions, please let us know.

Sincerely,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in cursive. The signature on the left is 'Sarah Lenz Lock' and the signature on the right is 'Diane Lifsey'. Both are written in dark ink on a white background.

Sarah Lenz Lock and Diane Lifsey  
Co-Chairs, LCAO Work Group on the White House Conference on Aging.