

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

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Hello. I'm Glenn McConnell. As your Lieutenant Governor, my responsibilities include presiding over the South Carolina Senate and overseeing the State's Office on Aging. With the State Senate adjourned *sine die* for the remainder of 2012, I have been able to shift my focus solely to the improvement of Aging services and resources across our State to ensure we are prepared for the large influx of seniors who either are retiring or moving to South Carolina.

Between 1970 and 2010, South Carolina's senior population increased by 319 percent. In 2010, the senior population was just over 900,000 - and that number is expected to more-than-double by 2030. Additionally, South Carolina ranks fourth in the United States for in-migration of seniors. Not only does this increase cause a tremendous strain on current structures we have in place - such as Medicare, Social Security, and many retirement systems - but it poses the question, "How is government going to continue to pay for all of these services?" We already have a system that is stretched to capacity, and the pressure is just beginning to build. In 20 to 30 years from now, I am concerned that the government may not be able to provide the safety net that a majority of Americans have always relied upon. Just last week in Washington, one of the public trustees, who oversee Social Security, was quoted as saying that "we are somewhere between critical and too late to deal with" resolving the problems before the surplus is gone in 2033, and the federal government will have no choice but to cut benefits.

We still have an opportunity to make significant improvements to a suffocating system of services if we act quickly. On the state level, it is my opinion that we must first assess the resources and the demands we have before we can develop a plan to meet these needs. Our office is dedicated to strategies that keep people in their homes as long as possible and through smart choices, delay or minimize the more expensive alternatives.

On September 4, I will begin traveling throughout the State to see some of the needs and challenges first-hand. This “Face of Aging” Tour will give me the opportunity to meet face-to-face with seniors, families, caregivers, and regional service providers to hear their comments relating to current resources as well as suggestions on how we can improve services in the future. We will also connect with local community leaders and elected officials to educate them on the impact of this population boom in addition to asking for their help and input. Promoting involvement among community leaders, partnerships, non-profits, and churches will prove invaluable, and it will help our office maximize efficiency. Community leaders know what needs are present in a city or town, they know businesses and individuals who may be willing to donate their time and resources for projects, and they are able to alert us to concerns in their area before larger problems develop.

Our office is dedicated to making a positive difference, and we want to do our part to make sure our State is prepared to handle such a drastic increase in senior adults. I encourage you to become involved in these meetings and take part in the discussion. The meetings will benefit you and your family, and I hope you can find the time to attend one of these informative public forums. For more information on the tour - in addition to forum dates and times in your area - please click on the link on this page to be directed to our “Face of Aging” Tour webpage.

If you have a few minutes and would like to share your thoughts or suggestions with me, please fill out the survey located on this site. It will automatically be sent to us upon completion.

Thank you. I look forward to meeting you soon.