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FREE WEBINAR
December 18, 2018
12 - 1 pm

Boomers and Advocacy:
Effective Civic Action and Older Adults



LaRhae Knatterud, Director, Aging Transformation, MN Dept of Human Services
Todd Stump, State Programs Administrator Principal, Aging, MN Dept of Human Services
Kathy Kelso, Advocate, St. Paul City Advisory Committee on Aging



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Introduction

- LaRhae Knatterud
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History of Self-Advocacy in Minnesota

- In the 1970s and 1980s Minnesota had the largest and strongest self-advocacy system in the country (my opinion but others too)
- The system included the Metro Senior Federation – later the Minnesota Senior Federation and later a network of regional senior federations were added
- These organizations were senior controlled and directed in terms of their priorities and most effort was directed at the state level, testifying and lobbying and demonstrating in front of legislative committees

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History of Self-Advocacy in Minnesota (2)

- Other players also included the Ombudsman for Older Minnesotans
- This office was required for State Units on Aging to provide ombudsman services in the areas of long-term care (later home care was separated), then acute care and some concentration on housing with services in the home care area
- This office grew to a system of regional ombudsman around the state
- Monies were from both federal and state sources

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History of Self-Advocacy in Minnesota (3)

- AARP in Minnesota doesn't stress self-advocacy as much as the Federations did
- Legal Aid was another actor in the advocacy area – not visible in the self advocacy arena
- As we moved into the 2000s and 2010s, the providers (both nonprofit and for profit) became more influential in the advocacy area
- Consumers and providers can agree on some issues (like need for more funding for aging services) but have different points of view on other issues (like regulation and oversight of provider services)

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History of Self-Advocacy in Minnesota (4)

- Fast forward to 2018, and we know the world has changed
- We know that aging issues and related advocacy are very dispersed
- If the days of strong statewide networks of individuals advocating for their peers, how do we organize for major advocacy efforts, e.g., to keep social security, Medicare and Medicaid strong for the enormous group of older adults that are coming into this age group and will heavily depend on those programs...

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Boomers and the Silent Generation: A Formidable Electorate

- Boomers and Silent Generation have highest voter turnout among all demographics
- 2008 – 2016: Age 60+ average 23.2% of Minnesota voters
- Age 65+ average 16.0%
- Minnesota voter file data: available for 60+
- National exit polls: available for 65+

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Boomers and the Silent Generation: A Formidable Electorate (continued)

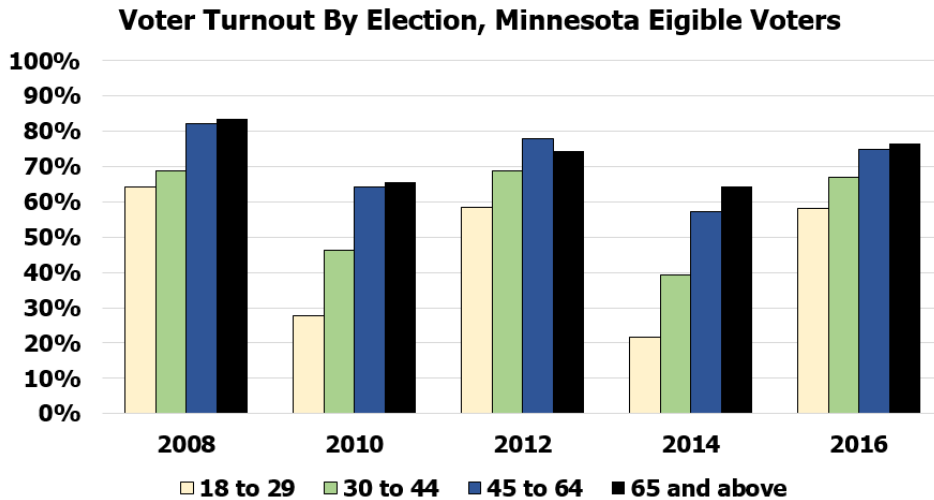
Voters over 65 years old, share of electorate

- Presidential elections: exceed their share of the electorate by ~2 points (~12%)
- Mid-term (Governor) elections: exceed their share of the electorate by ~5 points (~30%)
- Primary elections: exceed their share of the electorate by ~10 points (~63%)

Source: Minnesota Secretary of State Voter File

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Voter Turnout By Age Group: 2008 - 2016



Source: Minnesota Secretary of State Voter File

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Voter Share vs Composition of Electorate By Age Group: 2008 - 2016

| Age Group | Avg Comp of Electorate | Avg Comp of Voters | Share of Voters vs. Share of Electorate |
|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---|
| 18 to 29 | 22.0% | 15.5% | 70.5% |
| 30 to 44 | 25.7% | 23.7% | 92.2% |
| 45 to 64 | 36.1% | 41.6% | 115.2% |
| 65 and above | 16.2% | 19.2% | 118.7% |

Source: Minnesota Secretary of State Voter File

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High Voter Turnout: No Guarantee that Issues are Prioritized

- Has significant effect on cultural issues (legalization of cannabis, LGBTQ+ rights)
- In isolation, no statistically-significant effect on senior-friendly policies regarding transportation, consumer rights, benefits/entitlements

Source: Sarah F. Anzia, "When Does a Group of Citizens Influence Policy? Evidence from Senior Citizen Participation in City Politics," ***The Journal of Politics***, Sept 05, 2018. (Article is online only - Vol 80 No 4 is closest print issue)

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More than Voting: The Key To Action

- Effect did occur when older adults engaged in collective civic action beyond casting a ballot
- High voter turnout "activates" policy outcomes that are requested by older adults primarily in areas with higher activism

Source: Sarah F. Anzia, "When Does a Group of Citizens Influence Policy? Evidence from Senior Citizen Participation in City Politics," ***The Journal of Politics***, Sept 05, 2018. (Article is online only - Vol 80 No 4 is closest print issue)

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Example of Civic Action: Kathy Kelso

- St. Paul Advisory Committee on Aging; Chair, 2014-18
- Elder Voice Family Advocates, Board member



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Self-advocacy - the action of representing yourself, your views and interests

- Self-advocacy is authentic; it is the first step in building a movement.
- Self-advocacy, as a movement, could achieve what most, if not all, of us want: to age in one's own community. To stay in our own neighborhoods, or at least familiar surroundings, as we age.

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Examples of Self-Advocacy

- Act on Alzheimer's
- Elder Voice Family Advocates
- Saint Paul Advisory Committee on Aging

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Saint Paul For All 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Focus: Aging in Community



AGING IN COMMUNITY means that residents can stay in their community as they age. The entire community - not just a house or neighborhood - becomes a resource for health and activity. When people "age in community," they continue to use the resources of their community - housing, transportation, services, shopping, health care, recreation - to stay active, healthy and engaged.

Source: St Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan. www.stpaul.gov/stpaulforall

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Saint Paul For All

2040 Comprehensive Plan

Focus: Community Health



COMMUNITY HEALTH is impacted by everything a city does. Housing, transportation, land use, parks and economic development opportunities need to be designed to enhance personal health. A healthy community provides for personal safety, a clean environment, access to nutritious food, and a robust parks and open space system.

Source: St Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan. www.stpaul.gov/stpaulforall

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Links to More Information

City of Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan

- Copy or click the link below to view the plan:
- <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/2040-comprehensive-plan>

2040 Focus: Aging in Community

- Copy or click the link below to view the report:
- <https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Planning%20%26%20Economic%20Development/Aging%20in%20Community2.pdf>

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Links to More Information (continued)

2040 Focus: Community Health

- Copy or click the link below to view the report:
- <https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Planning%20%26%20Economic%20Development/Community%20Health2.pdf>

Saint Paul Advisory Committee on Aging

- Copy or click the link below to view the report:
- <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/mayors-office/committees-boards-and-commissions/advisory-committee-aging-acoa>

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Links to More Information (continued 2)

Saint Paul Advisory Committee on Aging Recommendations to the City of St. Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan - Reframing Aging: Opportunities for Aging in Community

- Copy or click the link below to view the report:
- https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Mayors%27s%20Office/Advisory%20Committee%20on%20Aging_Reframing%20Aging.pdf

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Thank you!

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Questions?
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NEXT WEBINAR
January 22, 2019
noon - 1:00 pm

**Keys to Understanding and Ethically
Treating Geriatric Depression and Anxiety**

By: Steven Atkinson, PA-C, MS, Founder & Partner
at Twin Cities Physicians

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