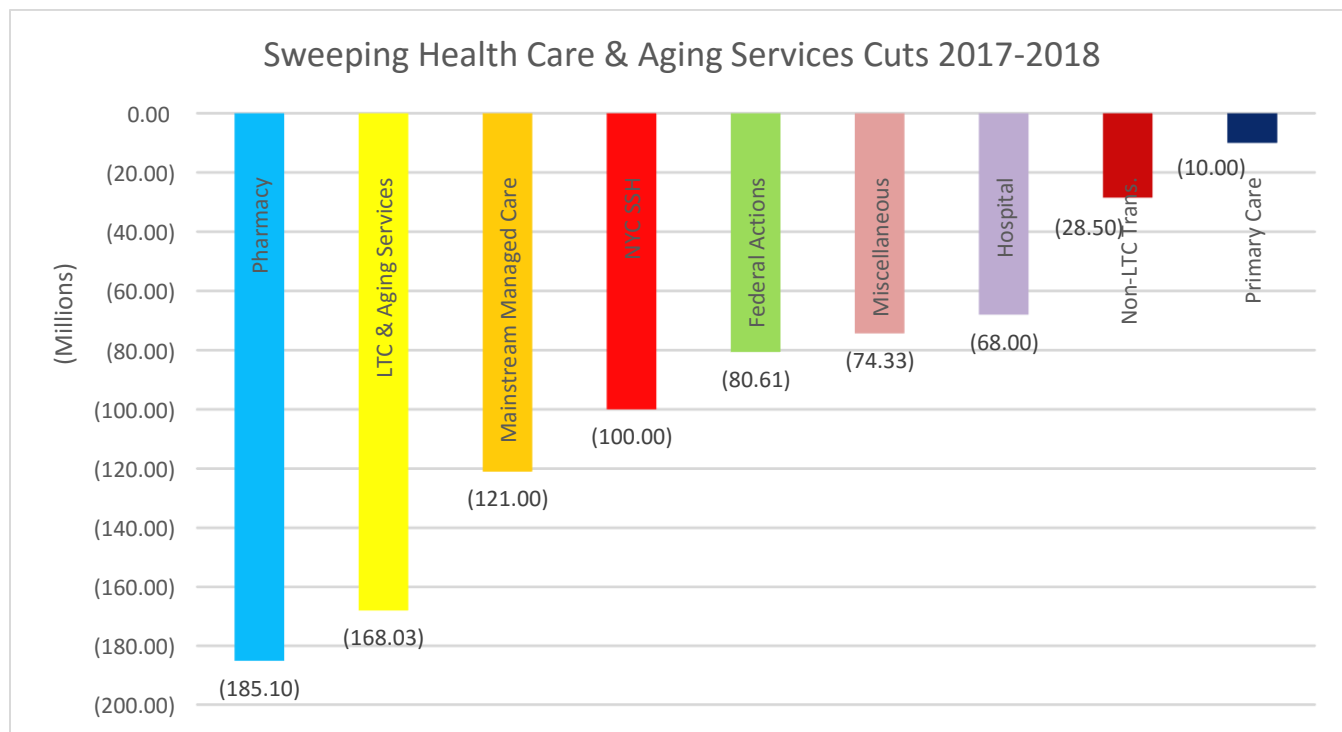
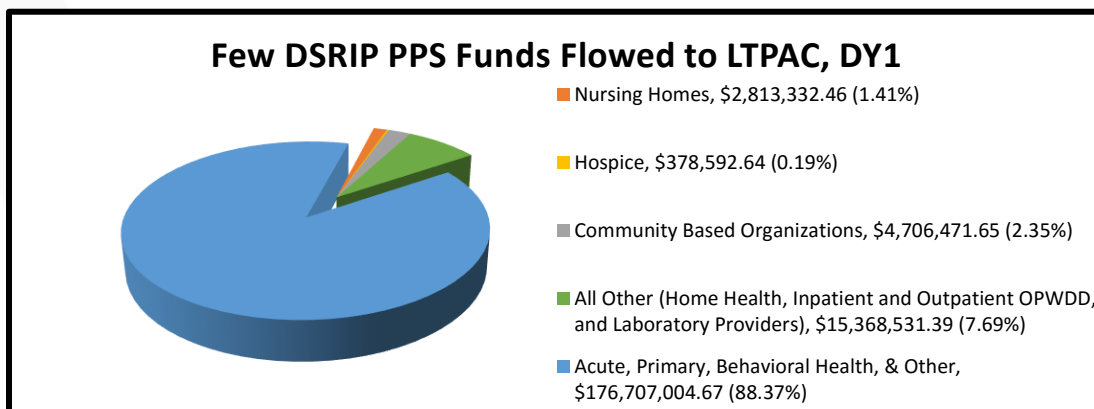


## Executive Budget Hurts Elderly and Disabled the Most

Long-Term and Post-Acute Care (LTPAC) providers and the people they care for continue to be left behind in many of the reforms and investments that are being provided by the State. Unfortunately, at a time when our over age 65 population is expanding and consumers are already facing gaps in care and services, the Executive Budget provides no investments for LTPAC and in fact makes this sector shoulder a disproportionate share of the proposed cuts.



The vast majority of funds made available through the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program and other state and federal infrastructure programs have continued to fund acute and primary care providers.



**Without your help, quality providers will struggle to maintain staff and services, and seniors and people with disabilities will struggle to find services in their communities.**

**Invest Capital in LTPAC Sector:** LTPAC providers have not received state financial support for the critical infrastructure needed to survive in today's changing health care environment. The Legislature should allocate \$200 million of the governor's \$500 million Statewide Health Care Transformation Program funding for LTPAC infrastructure, including health IT and health information exchange, telehealth, assisted living program expansion and a nursing home renovation and reconfiguration program aimed at upgrading the State's outdated infrastructure and improving quality of life for residents. Furthermore, the Legislature should include language to ensure that the funding is available to all LTPAC providers, including assisted living programs and hospices, who have been left out of the governor's proposal.

**Restore MLTC Cuts and Ensure Medicaid and MLTC Rate Adequacy:** With the enrollment of nursing home residents, expansion of benefits and new wage mandates, the costs of care have far outpaced premium revenue. The insufficiency of Managed Long Term Care (MLTC) rates has threatened the viability of providers, many of whom rely on plans for the majority of their revenue. Faced with inadequate payments for the nursing home benefit and more nursing home enrollees, MLTC plans are experiencing growing financial pressures. The Legislature should restore the Governor's proposed \$51 million in cuts to the MLTC program; ensure plans are paid a separate, adequate rate for nursing home enrollees and ensure that all quality funds that are withheld from MLTC rates are distributed.

**Fully Fund Increased Minimum Wage Mandate:** The funding in last year's state budget has been inadequate to cover the full costs of the new minimum wage. The \$15 per hour minimum wage will increase total compensation costs for health care providers by \$3 billion annually when fully implemented. Of this amount, nursing homes will incur an additional \$600 million cost, and home care/personal care agencies will incur a \$1.72 billion cost. Because LTPAC providers rely almost exclusively on public funds to cover their costs, the Legislature must provide adequate funding to cover the cost of the state's minimum wage mandate.

**Invest in Workforce Recruitment and Retention:** LTPAC providers are experiencing workforce shortages that have led to thousands of authorized home care hours going unfilled, and ongoing recruitment and retention issues for nursing homes, assisted living and adult care facilities. These shortages have resulted in long waiting lists for community-based services, increases in emergency room (ER) visits and hospitalizations, and reliance on overtime and staffing agencies. The Legislature should ensure that the DSRIP workforce funding is distributed to LTPAC providers in need; that other available workforce recruitment and retention funds are made available for LTPAC services; and that a comprehensive plan is developed to meet the demand for LTPAC services.

**Invest in Senior Housing and Support Services:** Investing in affordable housing with support services will provide low-income seniors with access to safe places to live and basic supports in the community, allowing them to age-in-place and delaying or preventing the need for high-cost Medicaid services. The Legislature should accept the Governor's proposed \$125 million for senior housing capital, but create a dedicated Affordable Senior Housing and Services Program. In addition, the Legislature should appropriate \$10 million for the Resident Service Coordinator Program, to enhance service coordination in existing and new senior housing for an array of services that assist residents to remain independent by emphasizing wellness and healthy aging.

**Invest in Assisted Living Services and Restore Enriched Housing Funding:** Assisted living and Enriched Housing (EH) offer Medicaid and SSI recipients an alternative to nursing home care, providing services at a lower cost. The Legislature should restore funding for the EH Subsidy and increase the Level 3 SSI rate by \$20 per resident day and institute an annual cost of living adjustment to the State portion of the rate thereafter. These cost-effective investments will save Medicaid dollars by maintaining these facilities as financially-viable alternatives to nursing home placement and enabling frail elderly beneficiaries to remain in community-based settings.

**Reject Organic Waste Mandate:** The Executive Budget would require certain "high volume generators" of food waste (i.e., two tons per week or more of excess food and food scraps at a single location), including health care facilities, manufacturers, supermarkets and other businesses to recycle food waste. Such businesses would need to divert excess edible food and food scraps to food banks, animal feed operations, composting facilities, anaerobic digesters, or other organics recycling facilities. No provision is made for Medicaid reimbursement of any associated costs. Health care facilities should be removed from this unfunded mandate.