

Edward G. Rendell

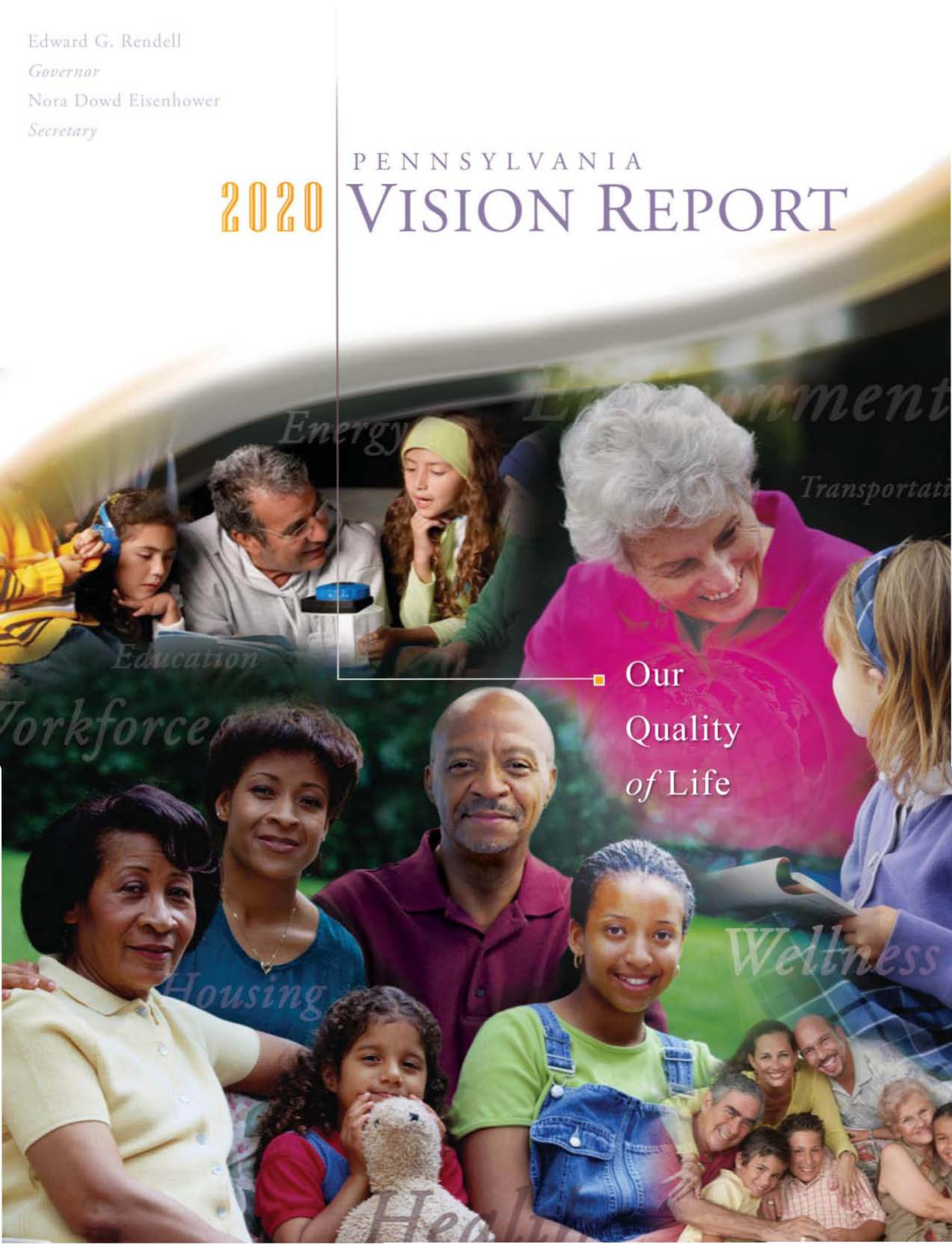
Governor

Nora Dowd Eisenhower

Secretary

2020

PENNSYLVANIA
VISION REPORT



■ Our
Quality
of Life

2020 VISION PROJECT

TO ASSIST STATE AGENCIES IN BEGINNING TO DEVELOP LONG-RANGE STRATEGIC PLANS TO ADDRESS A CHANGING POPULATION

“To intelligently plan for the future, we need to examine the issues affecting our quality of life: Healthcare & Wellness, Workforce & Education, Energy & Environment, and Housing & Transportation”

-Nora Dowd Eisenhower, Pennsylvania Secretary of Aging

The presidential election of 1968 marked the first time that the leading edge of the 78 million post-war Americans born between 1946 and 1964 – the “baby boomers” – could vote and use their voting power to affect social norms and civil authority. This turbulent demographic force defied traditional notions of religion, social activism, and politics and helped to shape the ideals embraced by society today. The safety, security, and traditional values of previous generations have been replaced by those of a demographic group that challenges institutions and authority, makes their own rules, and dares to make positive changes in their world.

Another demographic milestone arrived in 2006 when the leading edge of the baby boomer generation turned 60 and began to enter retirement. The stereotype of retirement, however, has changed from the golden years of leisure to the beginning of a time of high activity and purpose, a new life without the constraint of a 40-hour work week. Older Americans are increasingly volunteering their time, starting second careers, and choosing an active lifestyle well into their 80s. They are living longer, making use of new technologies, extending their working years, and enjoying higher levels of income and resources than their parents and grandparents did.

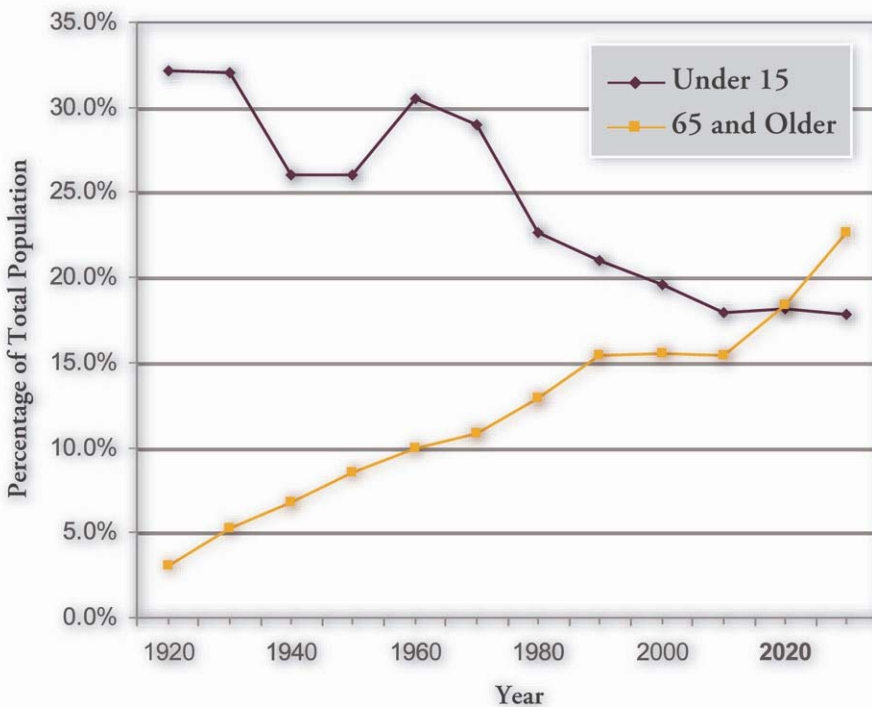
In the coming years, this growing generation is expected to strain the capacities, programs, and resources of healthcare, welfare, and financial agencies and institutions. Recognizing that Pennsylvania needs to define, develop, and implement new and existing programs to consider the demands and possibilities that will result from this demographic force, Governor Edward G. Rendell signed Executive Order number 2006-04, *Pennsylvania 2020 Vision Project*, on June 16, 2006. The Executive Order calls for an assessment of Pennsylvania’s future *challenges* and

associated fiscal impacts on state governments, as well as *opportunities* presented by a changing population and other socio-economic trends today, tomorrow, and in the future.

From the Past to the Present - Changing Times

In 2020, for the first time in history, the percentage of Pennsylvanians over 65 will surpass the percentage of young people under 15.

Pennsylvania Population under 15 and over 65



Demographically, Pennsylvania is among the “oldest” states in the nation: the Commonwealth currently ranks third in the nation in the percentage of people age 65 and older and, by the year 2020, more than one in four Pennsylvanians will be age 60 or older.

Even the older population will grow older. Pennsylvania ranks fourth among states in the number of people age 85 and older, and that population is projected to increase by 52 percent between 2000 and 2020. This can be expected to present major challenges to the Commonwealth, especially in the area of health and long-term care.

Additionally, life expectancy is increasing, adding to the growth of the boomer population. In the second half of the twentieth century, nearly ten years were added to life expectancy in the United States, a trend reflected in Pennsylvania as well.

Because age is not the only driving force in future planning, the Pennsylvania 2020 Vision Project evolved into a broader effort to develop a preliminary report wide enough in scope to help ensure that the needs of **all** Pennsylvania residents, regardless of age, are addressed. State agencies and departments assessed a wide range of trends that will define Pennsylvania in the coming years. The results of the survey of long-range planning yielded the following areas of importance: **healthcare and wellness, workforce and education, energy and environment, and housing and transportation.** The following key issues and concerns emerged during the survey process.

Healthcare and wellness (Physical, Cognitive, and Behavioral)

- Many Pennsylvanians use emergency rooms instead of primary care for routine healthcare. They are 11% more likely to visit the emergency room than the average American and the rate of increase is growing twice as fast as the U.S. average.
- Healthcare costs are centered on only 20% of patients with chronic diseases – an amazing 78% of total healthcare costs.
- Obesity and lack of physical activity are alarming trends. Over 60% of adults do not get enough physical activity to keep them healthy.
- Healthcare costs are rising and by 2030 the nation's healthcare spending is projected to increase by 25%. The cost of health care for someone over 65 is three to five times greater than the cost for someone under age 65.
- The increased risk of depression in the elderly can be associated with major stresses such as the development of a disabling illness, loss of a spouse or friend, retirement, and moving out of the family home; when the ability to function becomes limited; or as a side effect of commonly prescribed medications. Health professionals may mistakenly think that persistent depression is an acceptable response to other serious illnesses and the social and financial hardships that often accompany aging - an attitude often shared by older people themselves.

Workforce and education

- As the boomer generation begins to retire, there will be a decrease in the number of skilled workers to fill current jobs. The shortage of registered nurses is expected to grow to 12% by 2010 and, by 2020, there will be a shortage of 1 million nurses nationally. The U.S. Government Accounting Office warns that shortages of skilled workers could have harmful effects on productivity and economic growth.
- Nearly 7 out of 10 workers age 45-74 plan to work in some capacity in retirement, primarily because of financial need. Many also like their work and enjoy being productive and useful.
- Physical activity is strongly linked with lifelong brain health. Aerobic exercise in particular seems to sharpen memory skills.
- Mental exercise, especially learning new things or pursuing activities that are intellectually stimulating, may strengthen brain cell networks and help preserve mental functions.
- More formal education is associated with mental sharpness among older persons, possibly because continued learning creates a "neural reserve" of denser, stronger nerve-cell connections.
- A sense of control or influence over our lives and those of others—believing that what we do makes a difference—seems to prevent cognitive decline, for reasons that are unclear.
- While increased technology can supplement the shortage of workers, it is imperative that today's workers be trained to use the latest technological advances.

Energy and environment

- Over \$30 billion is spent outside of Pennsylvania annually to buy gas and liquid fuels.
- Over 110,000 acres of farmland are lost each year in Pennsylvania.
- Electricity rates in Pennsylvania could soar by fifty to seventy percent by the end of 2010.
- Pennsylvania contributes one percent of all the pollution that causes global warming - more than 105 developing countries combined. Pennsylvania produces more greenhouse gases than 47 states - only California and Texas produce more.
- Peak use, or demand for electricity during the hundred hottest hours each year, is also expected to grow. Almost 20 percent of the cost to serve a residential customer annually is because of the cost of insuring supply during the 100 hours of highest demand.

Housing and transportation

- The National Older Adult Housing Survey (NOAH), prepared by the National Center for Seniors' Housing Research, a cooperative effort between the NAHB Research Center and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging, found that over 80 percent of people 55 and older want to "age in place" by remaining in their homes and communities.
- According to the Transportation Funding and Reform Commission, Pennsylvania's state-owned highway system is the nation's third largest in terms of number of bridges and fifth largest in terms of roadway miles.
- Additionally, Pennsylvania highways are the prime routes for delivering goods between the Midwest and the Mid-Atlantic and New England states.

Development of 2020 Vision Project

All agencies and departments under the Governor's jurisdiction were asked to participate in planning a response to anticipated demographic changes and to evaluate the impact of the aging population on the economy, workforce, and tax base and on the social service, healthcare, and public infrastructure of the Commonwealth.

State agencies were asked to designate a senior official to oversee that agency's participation in the Pennsylvania 2020 Vision Project, contribute to project planning and activities, and to provide assistance in support of the objectives of the Pennsylvania 2020 Vision Project. As stated in the Executive Order, the purpose of the project is to facilitate the development of a Commonwealth-wide, multi-agency strategic response to the anticipated dramatic growth in the state's older population through the year 2020 and to determine what other major trends may affect state government operations during that timeframe.

Project Advisory Group Meeting

An Advisory Group composed of planning and policy staff from state government and stakeholder agencies, along with demographers and researchers from the academic community, was convened in the spring of 2006 to evaluate the process proposed by policy and planning staff of the Department of Aging and their consultants.

A strong recommendation emerged from the meeting: the group clearly felt that before 2020 planning is initiated, an effort should be made to gather information on current long-range planning by state agencies. The group advised the Department of Aging and participating organizations that the *2020 Vision Project* should not “reinvent the wheel” by undertaking an effort that may already be in place. Pursuant to this strong recommendation, the Department of Aging conducted a survey of long-range planning in the Commonwealth.

Long-Range Planning Survey Results

The Department of Aging sent out a total of seventy-two surveys in late July and early August 2006. Twenty-seven surveys went directly to cabinet-level state agencies, and forty-five more went to other selected agencies and stakeholder groups. Seven of the twenty-seven cabinet agencies indicated that they have a plan currently in effect, and six more are in the process of developing a plan. Four cabinet agencies indicated no current long-range planning efforts.

Most of the plans currently in effect are for a period of three to five years, with the exception of the Department of Transportation, whose current plan extends to 2030. This plan is used as a decision-making tool to set priorities that may change from year to year in response to shifting external factors, and the process involves the general public and numerous stakeholders. Most other state agencies indicated that their plans were strategic in nature, relying on constituent groups for input, with few emphasizing the use of demographic projections and trends.

Of the other forty-five stakeholder agencies surveyed, twenty responded to the survey. Fifteen responses were from state-related agencies and five were from other stakeholder groups. Only one had a plan that was currently in effect; twelve indicated that they were in the process of developing a plan; and seven had no current long-range plan and were not developing a plan. The time frames of the plans in this group were also primarily for three to five years. Most of the plans were developed internally by agency employees and senior management. The plans developed by the Pennsylvania Statewide Independent Living Council and AARP were the exceptions: they appeared to include more involvement of the public and other stakeholders.

The results of the survey of long-range planning yielded the first major finding of the *2020 Vision Project*. In short, there is little or no comprehensive, long-range planning currently being done at the state government level.

Cabinet Agency and Policy Meetings

The Department of Aging partnered with Geoffrey E. Meredith and Charles D. Schewe, PhD, of Lifestage Matrix Marketing (project partners) to assist state agencies, stakeholders, and other partners in understanding the rationale behind the *2020 Vision* initiative. The project partners provided training for state decision-makers and related stakeholders on how the changing demographics in Pennsylvania and the nation will require a fresh approach to the provision of programs and services to all Pennsylvania citizens, including older adults.

To assist agencies in preparing a response to *Pennsylvania 2020 Vision*, the Department of Aging and the project partners developed a 2020 Planning Manual. The manual includes detailed information on using the cohort analytic concept to assist in identifying and interpreting future issues affecting state government. In addition, agencies were given detailed data on projected demographic changes, along with information on a variety of trends that may have an influence on state operations over the long term. The manual presents a series of trends and issues on topics such as health, longevity, economic characteristics, living arrangements, technology, education, transportation, and travel and tourism.

Agencies were asked to complete a template with specific questions to guide them in addressing key issues, programs currently in place, proposed actions for the future (with a description of results and outcomes), and resources needed to implement the actions and plans through the year 2020. State agencies were asked to identify relevant trends affecting their respective agencies and to conduct interim assessments of needs in years 2010, 2015, and 2020 to determine the priorities and actions necessary to position Pennsylvania government to better respond to the future. Each agency's report, in turn, was incorporated into this plan summary. The manual is available on the Department of Aging's website at www.aging.state.pa.us.

Taking Action in Pennsylvania Today

The long-range planning survey presented preliminary groundwork by identifying resources already available to Pennsylvanians through state agencies, including the Department of Aging, Department of Public Welfare, Department of Agriculture, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, and the Department of Insurance. Further information on some of these programs is presented below.

Healthcare and Wellness

The Prescription for Pennsylvania (Rx PA) initiative, under the leadership of the Governor's Office of Health Care Reform and with the involvement of other state agencies including the Departments of Aging, Health and Public Welfare, is a set of integrated practical strategies for improving health care and containing costs for all Pennsylvanians. The core components are affordability, accessibility, and quality.

Pennsylvania, a global leader in the biosciences, has strengths at every phase of the bioscience business lifecycle, including world-class research, emerging and growing biotechnology, medical device and diagnostic companies, and global pharmaceuticals. The Technology Investment Office of the Department of Community and Economic Development ensures that a full continuum of capital, technical assistance, and infrastructure support is available for Pennsylvania's bioscience community. With approximately 2,000 bioscience and related companies and nearly 84,000 Pennsylvanians employed in these industries, the bioscience community plays a vital role in Pennsylvania's economy.

The Department of Agriculture helps consumers make healthier eating choices through programs that deliver a 40-pound box of nutritious food each month to a senior's home and provide vouchers for fresh produce at farm markets statewide to eligible seniors.

The Department of Public Welfare's nursing home transition program helps residents return to their community, allowing them to age in place. Its COMPASS program is an online registration system allowing residents to learn about, apply for, and renew benefits online. It is geared toward people in rural areas and people with limited mobility.

The Department of Aging, through its Prime-Time Health program and Healthy Steps for Older Adults, promotes healthy lifestyles and encourages older citizens to take personal responsibility for making necessary lifestyle changes.

The Department of Insurance currently administers two programs that provide health insurance to families with low incomes, who cannot afford other health insurance: Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and adultBasic. CHIP provides coverage for children from birth to their 19th birthday while adultBasic is for individuals from age 19 through 64.

Workforce & Education

Pennsylvania's Departments of Aging and Environmental Protection, the Corporation for National Service, created EASI (Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement). Volunteers work on a variety of environmental issues, which keeps them mentally and physically active and uses their knowledge and work experience to aid the environment. Currently EASI has undertaken water quality monitoring as one of their key foci.

The Department of Agriculture launched the Center for Farm Transitions in January 2006 to help new farmers get into agriculture, current farmers to take on more profitable commodities and related enterprises, and retiring farmers to wind down their farm operation while keeping precious natural resources in agriculture. These efforts not only improve the Commonwealth's workforce but also help to retain valuable farmland in the state.

The Department of Education's program, Job Ready PA, addresses the loss of educated and trained workers by targeting resources towards education and training in high-risk areas. Project 720, named for the number of days a student spends in high school from the beginning of 9th grade to the end of 12th grade, helps to transform Pennsylvania's high schools so that every student can succeed. Classrooms for the Future is a step toward large-scale high school reform to improve teaching and learning by creating technology-enriched instructional settings. Science: It's Elementary is designed to assist schools and districts to implement successful inquiry based, hands-on science education at the elementary school level in order to prepare youth for the careers of tomorrow.

Energy & Environment

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council provides energy audits, educational opportunity programs, and low interest loans to promote energy savings. At Allegheny College, green design options for its new North Village residence hall complex were evaluated, making it the first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design college facility in northwestern Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania Energy Harvest Grant Program helped finance the East Coast's first state-of-the-art biofuels injection facility. The plant will replace 3.2 million gallons of foreign oil with domestically produced biodiesel and keep \$6 million worth of energy dollars in Pennsylvania by reducing the state's need to purchase imported fuels.

The Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority and the Department of Community and Economic Development provide nearly \$1 billion in tax-free bonds for clean and alternative energy ventures such as Gamesa Energy, a Spanish wind energy powerhouse. Gamesa's development plans, totaling \$40 million, are expected to create as many as 1,000 jobs over the next five years.

Act 213 of 2004, the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act, signed into law by Governor Edward G. Rendell on November 30, 2004, requires that a certain percentage of the electric energy sold to retail customers in Pennsylvania by electric distribution companies and electric generation suppliers be derived from alternative energy resources. This includes, but is not limited to, solar, wind, hydropower, geothermal, biomass, and demand side management resources.

Housing & Transportation

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation provides a free transit program for senior citizens allowing persons 65 and older to ride free on local fixed-route transportation during off-peak hours. The Shared-Ride Program offsets 85 percent of the fare for door to door transportation for persons 65 and older.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health is creating programs that focus on preventive measures to improve a person's ability to accomplish Activities of Daily Living (ADL). Activities focus on

fall prevention by promoting physical activity, strength training, flexibility training, and home safety.

The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency in concert with Department of Public Welfare sponsors the Living Independence for the Elderly (LIFE) program. This program pulls together both traditional and non-traditional services in order to support the individual and allow older adults to live in their homes and in the community for as long as possible. All participants meet with a physician, nurse, social worker, dietician, and rehabilitation coordinator prior to enrollment and every three months to develop and monitor a plan of care.

Baby Boomers Around the World

Many countries, including Australia, New Zealand, Japan, the former Soviet Union, and those in Europe, experienced a baby boom similar to that of the United States. In 2000, only five countries had a larger percentage of their population over age 65 than under age 15. By 2030, it is projected that all developed countries will have a larger percentage of their population over age 65 than under age 15. Awareness of programs in other countries, helps agencies in Pennsylvania adapt and plan for long-range demographic change.

Healthcare and Wellness

- In Britain, BTCV's Green Gym® program links physical activity with mental activity to improve overall health. The Green Gym is a health initiative offering individuals an outdoor alternative to conventional gyms and the opportunity to increase their physical activity levels through direct involvement in practical conservation activities.
- Aibo, a robot dog created in Japan, was designed for older persons seeking the companionship and sense of responsibility that come with owning a pet without veterinarian visits and daily feedings.
- South Africa has developed SIMpill, a pill bottle that is able to send a text message to a remote server to monitor whether a patient is properly administering medication.

Workforce & Education

- In Germany, the "Senior-Info-Mobil" is a double-decker bus that travels to communities of older people to help them learn how to use computers and increase internet safety.

- In Portugal, Microsoft has partnered with a textile trade association to help in retraining older workers who have been laid off due to global competitiveness.
- The Prime Minister of France has developed a four-year initiative that seeks to keep older people employed by using fixed term contracts that prohibit companies from implementing a mandatory retirement age of 65.

Energy & Environment

- The 2007 Spring European Council adopted an energy policy for Europe that aspires to save energy and promote climate-friendly energy sources. EU leaders set a firm target of cutting 20-30 percent of the EU's greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 and increased the goal for renewable energy sources by 2020 to 20 percent from the present 6.5 percent.
- In Japan, scientists are studying how to turn inedible crops such as straw into biofuel to run cars because of concerns that the growing popularity of ethanol is inflating food prices. Biofuels are seen as an alternative clean energy resource that can reduce dependence on Middle Eastern oil and lessen the impact on global warming.

Housing & Transportation

- In Hong Kong, 95 percent of the population holds a stored value "Octopus" smart card, which can be used to pay fares throughout Hong Kong's public transportation network including subways, buses, ferries, minibuses, and taxis.
- Smart home technology, such as used in the Vallgossen project in Stockholm, Sweden, is being explored to improve quality of life and enable people to stay in their home longer. In this project, when the entrance door is locked, the water supply is automatically shut off two hours later, as well as gas or electricity to stove and sockets. At the same time the burglar alarm is activated and if a moisture detector indicates no need for ventilation, the ventilation in the bathroom is reduced.
- To help older citizens in Hong Kong, Singapore's Public transportation system will soon outfit multilingual signs for all its stations. These signs will be on all platforms, entrances and train system maps.

Pennsylvania is Planning for the Future

State agencies are planning ahead for the anticipated demographic increase in the coming years. Programs and services are in the planning stages and legislation is being considered to fund and implement these programs and services. Some initiatives have already been established and many options cross over to embrace several areas of concern in the Pennsylvania 2020 Vision Project.

Healthcare and Wellness

On February 8, 2006, Governor Edward G. Rendell announced his groundbreaking bioscience research initiative called the Jonas Salk Legacy Fund (JSLF). Building on the Commonwealth's strengths in biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, and medical devices, the fund will provide \$500 million in accelerated funding to spur medical innovation and life-saving treatments.

Programs to cover uninsured adults and to Cover All Kids will make affordable health insurance available to uninsured Pennsylvanians, easing the inappropriate use of emergency rooms for basic healthcare. Legislation has been proposed to establish standardized basic health plans with several co-pay options, providing availability to all.

Pennsylvania is planning to increase the number of health care providers by funding training for more nurses and other health care providers, thus preparing our workforce for our changing demographics.

High-quality long-term living options that give consumers a choice about where they receive care and support services, whether in institutional or home and community based settings, will be available in Pennsylvania. Funds will be prudently managed to ensure availability to more people and a goal of 50% home living and 50% institutional care will be optimized, helping Pennsylvanians remain independent as they age.

Pennsylvania is planning to reduce the number of unnecessary hospital admissions and readmissions caused by health care acquired infections, medical errors, readmissions due to complications, and improper chronic disease management. These steps will lower health care costs for everyone while improving quality of life for our most frail.

Pennsylvania is taking steps to increase the health of its schoolchildren by enhancing its physical fitness programs and ensuring access to school breakfast and nutritious food throughout the day.

These wellness efforts are aimed at creating healthier lifestyles which will lower health care costs in the long run.

Workforce & Education

Over half of the agencies responding to the long-range survey identified workforce concerns as key priorities in the coming years because of the increased number of retirees expected by 2020 and the corresponding decrease in the number of individuals in the workforce. A major concern is the expected decrease in the number of health care workers during a time when there is a projected increase in the demand for healthcare services.

Pennsylvania will increase the number of health care providers by funding the training of more nurses, thereby increasing diversity among health care professionals. Scholarships, grants, and loan forgiveness programs will ease the financial burden for those desiring to enter the nursing field and initiatives and grants will allow institutions to analyze the feasibility of expanding and/or opening new nursing education programs. In addition, the Clinical Education Expansion Initiative will increase the opportunities for nursing students to obtain clinical experience.

In addition, health care providers in Pennsylvania will be able to practice to the fullest extent allowed by their education and training through laws that redefine and expand the roles of dental hygienists, midwives, certified Physician Assistants, certified registered nurse practitioners, and clinical nurse specialists in practices and institutions. As our population ages, care professions will be in great demand and offer myriad opportunities for our workforce.

Pennsylvania will increase its dual enrollment funding from \$2 million to \$10 million to help high school students earn college credit, with half of the new resources dedicated to supporting low-income high school students.

Additionally, Pennsylvania is continuing to expand its nationally renowned Classrooms for the Future program, which puts laptops on every student's desk and utilizes the internet to make learning more interactive. These efforts acknowledge that a better educated workforce is essential to support our population across the life spectrum in the years ahead.

Energy & Environment

Pennsylvania is preparing for the future by financing energy programs and energy efficiency requirements that could save ratepayers up to \$1 billion annually or about \$73 for each residential customer. The Energy Independence Fund will be created by a benefits charge per kilowatt hour that would average about \$5.40 per household. Conservation and efficiency are essential in making affordable energy accessible to all Pennsylvanians, especially elders on fixed incomes.

By requiring that Pennsylvanians grow and use one billion gallons of clean and renewable fuels, the state anticipates keeping energy dollars at home. The Energy Independence Strategy will keep \$30 billion at home by purchasing fuel from Pennsylvania's companies and farmers instead of foreign sources.

Pennsylvania will expand energy production and energy technology sectors to create more jobs. The Energy Independence Strategy will create over 13,000 direct and 22,000 indirect jobs and \$3.5 billion in investments over the next 10 years. Assuring that Pennsylvania is on the frontier of emerging technologies will expand our tax base to better serve our shifting demographics.

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, through its Conservation Volunteer Programs, will increase the number of volunteers, especially among those over age 50 to help with creating or clearing hiking trails, improving wildlife habitat, assisting with visitor centers, conducting guided walks, presenting interpretive programs, designing general engineering projects, maintaining technical specifications and catalogs, developing computer databases, serving as "live-in" hosts at state park campgrounds, planting trees and flowers, repairing foot bridges, researching and writing the history of forests, state parks and heritage parks, and developing checklists of flora and fauna. These kinds of initiatives seek to harness the collective experience of Pennsylvania's older adults that can be of great benefit to our economy and workforce.

Housing & Transportation

Pennsylvania will increase funding to repair crumbling highways, fix bridges, and assist mass transit systems. Governor Rendell signed legislation that dedicates an average of \$946 million a year over the next decade to mass transit agencies and road and bridge projects. A vibrant transportation infrastructure will make Pennsylvania a better place to live and work, while supporting active aging lifestyles.

Pennsylvania has enacted legislation that will allow Pennsylvanians to confidently choose a less restrictive, licensed, assisted-living residence that meets state standards. This will allow individuals needing 24-hour care the opportunity to live in a home-like environment that respects their privacy by providing them with their own living space, including a bathroom and capacity for a kitchen. Residents also will receive the support that they need to retain control over their lives. This initiative is one of many being pursued by the Office of Long Term Living to improve the infrastructure that will care for our aging population.

Pennsylvania is investigating identification systems as a tool to improve the program for users and operators and at the same time streamline internal controls, thereby improving mobility for senior citizens and the financial condition of transit operators. In addition, SEPTA is examining and evaluating potential fare collection systems such as smart card technology, enabling seniors to use public transportation on a voucher system.

Conclusions

The *Pennsylvania 2020 Vision Project* brought together state agencies with the common goal of addressing long-term trends in the Commonwealth. Agencies identified major issues and potential impacts and put forth a broad plan to better serve the people of Pennsylvania. A great deal of valuable information came from this survey, and Pennsylvania is using that information to prepare for the future and to improve and enhance services, not only to the demographic force of those above the age of 60, but to all Pennsylvanians.

Governor Rendell expressed this optimism in his 2007 Inaugural Address on January 16, 2007:

“In 1936, four years after he was elected to take us out of the Great Depression, Franklin Roosevelt noted the progress that had been achieved in the first four years up to that point, and asked: "Shall we pause now and turn our back upon the road that lies ahead? Shall we call this the promised land? Or, shall we continue on our way?"

For us, it would certainly be easier to stop and rest for awhile. For we have made great progress and the road ahead, much like that which faced F.D.R., presents unknown risks. It offers an unknown and uncertain future - one with no guarantee of success.

Yet the road ahead offers unparalleled opportunities as well.

My fellow citizens, Pennsylvania is poised for greatness. I see a state that has the ability to educate and train all of our children to succeed in today's high-tech, global economy, and one that is willing to make the kinds of strategic investments that attract high-wage jobs to keep those young people in Pennsylvania for a lifetime.

I see a state that makes healthcare affordable for everyone, especially our most vulnerable citizens - our seniors and our children. Ours can be a commonwealth that provides a financially sound system of mass transit and a first-class network of highways and bridges. And to help us get there, I see a Pennsylvania that builds on its status as one of the nation's leader in the production of renewable sources of energy like solar and wind, and bio-diesel and ethanol - sources that rely on coal and wood chips, saw grass and agricultural products that we possess in abundance.

And finally, I see a Pennsylvania that continues to squeeze every nickel of waste from the operation of our government while at the same time addressing the pressing problems in need of a variety of reforms. A government that consistently puts the common interest ahead of special interest.

To accomplish this vision, in the next 30 days, I will set forth an "Agenda for Pennsylvania Progress." An agenda that calls for major new strategic investments in education, in alternative energy development, in transportation and in our growing economy. And we will start with a major new plan for healthcare reform.

Tomorrow, I will announce the details of the "Prescription for Pennsylvania," a comprehensive initiative to make healthcare more affordable for all of our citizens, while at the same time making our businesses across the state more competitive by reducing the crushing burden of spiraling healthcare costs. Enactment of this proposal will make healthcare more affordable for nearly one million Pennsylvanians, and will eliminate billions in wasted healthcare dollars.

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Pennsylvania's future lies in the many challenges ahead and there can be no stopping to rest.

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Together, we can realize our common dream of greatness for Pennsylvania.

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Links:

AARP: www.aarp.com

Pennsylvania Department of Aging: <http://www.aging.state.pa.us/>

United States Administration on Aging: <http://www.aoa.gov/>

National Institute on Aging: <http://www.nia.nih.gov/>

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania: www.pa.gov

County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania: <http://www.pacounties.org/>

Pennsylvania Area Agencies on Aging: <http://www.p4a.org/>

Penn Institute on Aging: <http://www.med.upenn.edu/aging/>