



Area resident attends White House Conference on Aging

A total of 21 Minnesotans were among the 1,200 delegates from across the U.S. to attend the recent White House Conference on Aging, held Dec. 11 to 14, 2005, in Washington, D.C. They participated in the historic conference as appointees of Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty. Held every 10 years, White House Conferences on Aging are designed to make recommendations to the President and the Congress on national aging policies for the future. The 2005 conference was the fifth in history and the first of this century.

The delegates were chosen by governors, members of Congress, the National Congress of American Indians and the WHCoA Policy Committee. "This was a very rewarding and beneficial experience," said Jim Varpness, executive director of the Minnesota Board on Aging. "The input from the conference will help our national leaders establish and implement policies to help our aging citizens."

The 2005 conference had a legislative mandate to focus on the aging of today and tomorrow, including 78 million baby boomers who will begin to turn age 60 in January 2006. In convening this 2005 conference, Policy Committee Chair Dorcas R. Hardy encouraged the delegates to "envision the future" as they work on how their resolutions might be put into action. In completing their work, the conference delegates approved more than 50 resolutions on topics that included, long-term care, health care, Medicare and Medicare Part D, and many other issues.

The final report of the 2005 White House Conference on Aging will be completed by June 2006.