



MARK AND YVONNE'S “SERVE OUR SENIORS” 5-POINT PLAN

1 ESTABLISH A “SENIOR SERVICES CENTER” IN THE OFFICE OF THE LT. GOVERNOR

Minnesota’s Senior Citizens will have one toll-free number in the Lieutenant Governor’s Office that they can call for help with a state or federal agency, a nursing home, or any other problem. Under the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Yvonne Prettner Solon, Minnesota’s Seniors will be assured of help that is swift, efficient, and responsive to their needs.

2 HELP SENIORS LIVE WHERE THEY CHOOSE

Governor Pawlenty’s and the Legislature’s cuts to Local Government Aids and Property Tax Credits have caused significant increases in property taxes, which have forced many Seniors and other Minnesotans on fixed-incomes out of their homes. We will continue the assistance to local governments, and income-targeted property tax relief that will allow Seniors to maintain options about where they live.

MARK AND YVONNE'S "SERVE OUR SENIORS" 5-POINT PLAN

3 RESTORE CUTS TO MINNESOTA'S RENTERS' CREDIT

This year, Governor Pawlenty and the Legislature cut the Renters' Credit by \$52 million or about 30%. Nearly a third of all Minnesotans who benefit from the Renters' Credit are either Seniors or people with disabilities. We will restore that cut and restore Minnesota's commitment to affordable housing for our Seniors.

4 REINSTATE FAIR REIMBURSEMENT RATES TO NURSING HOMES








This year, the Governor and the Legislature cut \$5.9 million to the scheduled payments for nursing homes. Those cuts have damaged the financial conditions of many nursing homes and threaten the very survivals of some. 54 nursing homes have closed in Minnesota since 2000, and more than 1/4th of those remaining have been determined to be at risk of financial collapse by an independent audit. We will restore the state's promise to adjust reimbursement rates so that nursing homes can be adequately staffed and deliver high-quality care to Minnesota's Seniors.

5 RESTORE CUTS TO SENIOR CARE SERVICES

This year, the Governor and the Legislature cut millions of dollars from programs including Aging Prescription Drug Assistance, Meals on Wheels, and Senior Volunteer Programs. We will restore those cuts and strengthen those essential programs.


MARK AND YVONNE: CHAMPIONS FOR SENIORS

MARK'S RECORD OF COMMITMENT TO SENIORS

-  Mark donated his entire U.S. Senate salary to pay for bus trips for Minnesota Seniors to Canada, where they could buy much cheaper prescription drugs. On average, each person saved around \$300 on their drug bill as a result of the trip.
-  Mark passed in the Senate his “Taste of their Own Medicine” amendment, which limited Members of Congress to the same prescription drug benefits they provided Seniors under Medicare. Unfortunately, it was eliminated behind closed doors in conference committee.
-  Mark voted against the bill, which prohibited Medicare officials from negotiating lower prices for prescription drugs. He co-sponsored all of the Democrats’ bills to eliminate that terrible prohibition, all of which were defeated by Senate Republicans.
-  Mark introduced the “Rx Relief for Seniors Act” in 2001, which would have created a \$1,000 refundable tax credit to defray the exorbitant cost of prescription drugs.
-  Mark co-sponsored several bills that would have equalized Medicare benefits for Minnesota Seniors with those for Seniors in other states.
-  Mark introduced the “Pharmaceutical Excess Price Tax” which would have penalized drug companies that gouge American seniors. It would have generated up to \$10 billion per year, which would have been used to give prescription drug benefits to Seniors across the country.
-  Mark received a 100% rating from the Alliance for Retired Americans in 2001, 2002, 2004 2005, and 2006, with a 98.3% rating overall as Senator, indicating that he stood up for America’s seniors and promoted legislation on their behalf.

MARK AND YVONNE: CHAMPIONS FOR SENIORS

YVONNE'S RECORD OF COMMITMENT TO SENIORS:

-  Yvonne voted against the 2010 Legislature's cuts to the Renters' Credit. Those cuts reduced the program's budget by nearly one-third in fiscal year 2011, a devastating blow to Minnesota's Seniors who comprise a significant proportion of the program's beneficiaries.
-  Yvonne voted against the 2010 Legislature's cuts to nursing homes, which will only force already lean Senior care providers to cut back on staff and services for their residents.
-  Yvonne voted against the 2010 Legislature's cuts to Continuing Care services including cuts to Aging Prescription Drug Assistance, Meals on Wheels, and Senior Volunteer Programs.
-  Yvonne voted against the 2010 Legislature's \$300 million in cuts to local government aids and credits. These state aids and credits allow local governments to provide essential services such as police / fire protection and pothole repair, while keeping property taxes low.
-  Yvonne supported and voted for rate increases to home and community-based waived services for Minnesota's seniors.
-  Yvonne authored a bill in 2007 to substantially increase payment rates to under-funded nursing homes. The final version of the bill included a five-year phase-in of those adjusted rates. As noted above, the 2010 Legislature eliminated those scheduled payment adjustments for the current budget cycle.
-  Yvonne authored and passed a higher payment rate to long-term care providers in 2005. She also authored nursing home rate increases in 2009 and 2010, but the Legislature failed to pass those desperately-needed measures.