

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**

**PROCLAMATION NO. 2011-068**

**Proclaiming June 15, 2011, as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day in Multnomah County**

**The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners finds:**

- a. June 15, 2011 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Initiated in 2006, the day supports the United Nations International Plan of Action, recognizing the significance of elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue.
- b. On this day, governments, agencies, educational institutions, professionals in the field of aging, community and religious groups, and many others will promote a better understanding of abuse and neglect of older persons by organizing to raise awareness of the cultural, social, economic and demographic processes contributing to elder abuse and neglect.
- c. Elder abuse is most often defined as any act that harms a senior or jeopardizes his or her health or welfare.
- d. A recent survey found that an estimated 11% of people ages 60 and older had experienced some form of abuse or neglect over a one-year period. Based on 2009 census numbers, this amounts to over 6 million older adults subjected to abuse or neglect in the United States.
- e. Elder abuse, including neglect and exploitation, are very serious issues that cause widespread justice and social problems. Elder abuse is overwhelmingly perpetrated by the victims' own family members. Nationally, seniors lose a minimum of \$2.6 billion each year to financial abuse and exploitation.
- f. Elder abuse is also a very serious health issue. Elder victims of abuse, neglect and exploitation have three times the risk of dying prematurely. Elder abuse victims tend to be older, very frail and often dependent on their abusers for basic life-sustaining care.
- g. In Multnomah County, Adult Protective Services handled 8,100 reports of abuse, neglect or exploitation in Fiscal Year 2010. Eliminating abuse of older persons has been a significant goal and mission of the program.
- h. Multnomah County's Adult Protective Services initiated a countywide Interagency Committee for Abuse Prevention (ICAP). The committee – composed of judges, law enforcement, the District Attorney's office, Aging and Disability Services employees, and others – meets regularly to discuss elder abuse issues.
- i. In Fiscal Year 2010, Multnomah County's Financial Abuse Specialist Team was able to recoup more than \$1.6 million in money and services for seniors. Over Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011, the District Attorney obtained court orders securing \$2.5 million in restitution for victims.

- j. Multnomah County's Gatekeeper Program also works with nontraditional referral sources who come into contact with seniors and people with disabilities through everyday activities. Gatekeepers are trained to identify signs and symptoms that can identify vulnerable adults in need of assistance, who are then linked to critical social and health services. Between Adult Protective Services and the Gatekeeper Program, 128 community education trainings were given last year.
- k. All community members should watch for signs of abuse such as physical trauma; social withdrawal; depression; anxiety; fear of family members, friends or caregivers; or financial exploitation.

**The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Proclaims:**

June 15, 2011, is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. We urge public agencies, the private sector, advocates and all members of our community to commit to building a community free of elder abuse.

ADOPTED this 2nd day of June, 2011.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

  
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Jeff Cogen, Chair

SUBMITTED BY:  
Commissioner Loretta Smith, District 2  
Commissioner Judy Shiprack, District 3