



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, April 16, 2004

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HHS NAMES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING

HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson announced today that former Virginia Department on Aging Commissioner Ann Y. McGee, Ed.D., will serve executive director for the 2005 White House Conference on Aging.

The White House Conference on Aging occurs once a decade in order to make policy recommendations to the President and Congress to assist the public and private sectors in promoting the dignity, health, independence, and economic security of current and future generations of older persons. Dr. McGee will oversee the planning of the conference.

“This conference occurs as the first wave of the baby boom generation prepares for retirement, creating an important opportunity to creatively reassess aging in America and improve the lives of older Americans,” Secretary Thompson said. “Ann has a long, proud record of serving older Americans and will take the right steps to ensure a successful conference.”

The White House Conferences on Aging convene every 10 years and have served as catalysts to develop and define aging policy over the past 40 years. The conferences have contributed to the establishment of many of the key aging programs such as Medicare and Medicaid, the Older Americans Act, the Supplemental Security Income program and the National Institute on Aging.

The conference will involve a policy committee with 17 members. The President will appoint nine members to the committee, including the chairman, and Congress will appoint the other eight members.

Dr. McGee served commissioner of the Virginia Department on Aging from 1997 until 2002. As commissioner, she developed and implemented strategic state plans, policies, and programs that ensured independence and self-sufficiency for older adults. She received a doctorate in adult and community college education from North Carolina State University in 1980. She also holds a master’s degree and bachelor’s degree from the university.

“This White House Conference on Aging will create a new vision on aging that reflects the vibrancy of today’s elder population,” Assistant Secretary for Aging Josefina Carbonell said. “Ann’s extensive experience in long-term care policy and her work at the state and community level will allow us to develop policy that will improve the lives of all seniors in America.”

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