



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Public Affairs

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State aging conference aims to build a livable, senior-friendly North Carolina
Governor Perdue charges participants to meet the challenges ahead

RALEIGH—North Carolina's baby boomers, one quarter of the state's population, are beginning to enter retirement, the start of an enormous increase in the number of older residents and the need for services geared toward them, Gov. Bev Perdue told participants at a state conference Wednesday.

Perdue welcomed nearly 650 seniors, aging service providers, advocates and experts in the field of aging to the North Carolina Governor's Conference on Aging at the Sheraton RTP in Durham. She emphasized this year's theme, **Building a Livable and Senior-Friendly North Carolina**, in asking conference participants to help the state meet the coming wave of demographic change head on.

"We must come up with creative solutions to make senior services work better for our aging population in these tight budget times," Perdue said. "And we must seize opportunities to use the talents and experience of our seniors."

With the focus on developing policy recommendations, Gov. Perdue called on the conference participants to help shape the future of the state for *"living wise and aging well."*

Under an historic executive order from Gov. Perdue, agencies, for the first time, are working to identify ways to better prepare for an aging workforce, to improve the safety and security of seniors, to increase opportunities for lifelong learning and to identify ways to better utilize senior volunteers and their skills. This is part of working toward one of the Governor's cornerstone objectives: building safer and healthier communities.

Today, 37 North Carolina counties have more people age 60 and older than those 17 and younger. In 2030, it is projected that 71 counties will have more people age 60 and older than those 17 and younger.

The primary goal of the conference is to develop recommendations to guide future state policy to strengthen North Carolina's response for its aging population. The work of conference participants will build on two activities initiated by Gov. Perdue—the Governor's Policy Roundtables and the Assessment of the State's Readiness for an Aging Population, which were conducted through the spring and summer. The work of conference participants—along with that of the roundtables and state assessment—will inform the next State Aging Plan for 2011-2015.

For more information about the Governor's Conference on Aging, go to www.aging.unc.edu/nccoa.

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