

## Massachusetts Prevent Injuries NOW! Network

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May 19, 2008

The Hon. Steven C. Panagiotakos, Chairman  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
State House, Room 212  
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Senate Budget amendment #782

Dear Chairman Panagiotakos:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Prevent Injuries Now! Network, a coalition of more than 50 health care and public safety professionals across the state, I am urging you and your colleagues to support Floor Amendment #782.

This amendment, sponsored by Senator Richard T. Moore, would earmark an additional \$100,000 for the Department of Public Health to enable DPH to conduct a pilot program aimed at reducing the incidence and severity of falls and fall-related injuries among our older adult population.

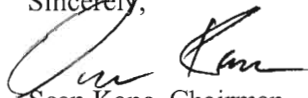
As you know, DPH reported last month that fall-related deaths among Massachusetts residents over age 65 jumped 78 percent last year, a public health problem that will only worsen as our population ages.

Senator Moore recognizes that fall injuries cost our state's health care system an estimated \$400 million each year in discharge costs alone, and that falls, and the hip fractures and brain injuries that often result, rob our senior citizens of their independence, confidence and quality of life.

This small investment in prevention will enable DPH and its partners to implement workable solutions, including medication screenings, eye exams, and healthy diet and exercise programs for our state's senior citizens, enabling them to lead safer and more independent lives well into their sunset years.

The language of Senator Moore's amendment follows. I sincerely hope you are able to provide this initiative with your full support. Please call me at 508-252-2333 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Sean Kane, Chairman  
Massachusetts Prevent Injuries Now! Network  
[www.masspinn.org](http://www.masspinn.org)

**EHS 782**

**FALLS PREVENTION PILOT PROGRAM**

Mr. Moore moved that the bill be amended, in Section 2, in item 4510-0100, by adding at the end thereof the following:- "provided further that not less than \$100,000 shall be expended for the purpose of a falls prevention pilot program in the department of public health. Said program shall provide direct assistance to health care facilities, long-term care providers, home care providers and community groups to reduce falls among the elderly, particularly those duly eligible for Medicare and Medicaid;" and in said item, by striking out the figure "\$21,911,667" and inserting in place thereof the figure "\$22,011,667".