



STATE OF WISCONSIN

**BARBARA LAWTON**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

“Since taking office, I make the economic security of Wisconsin’s most vulnerable citizens a top priority in my work. Smart decisions are data-driven. The Wisconsin Elder Economic Security Index gives us, for the first time, an accurate way to measure economic security to inform better policy.

“The Wisconsin Elder Standard vastly improves on the anachronistic federal ‘poverty line,’ a political construction based on a subsistence level of food costs only and on the assumption that those food costs equal one-third of an elder’s fixed expenses. Food costs today are more likely to approximate 15% of an elder’s fixed monthly expenses; the true measure of security must take into account actual costs for housing, health care, transportation and miscellaneous expenses as well.

“The poorest of our elders cannot begin to meet their day-to-day expenses and maintain their health on a minimal Social Security income. This Index will help us zero in on those elders living in poverty with precision to discover what policy changes need to be made to support lives of good health and dignity. I look forward to working with the Wisconsin Women’s Network and its allied organizations to close the economic security gap for Wisconsin’s elders.”

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