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Vision Shared and Partners Tackle Senior Citizen Economic Project

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Vision Shared is partnering with Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy and the Gerontology Institute at UMASS-Boston, to highlight the need for greater economic security for West Virginia's aging population.

Vision Shared, a statewide nonprofit, nonpartisan community and economic development organization, operates several volunteer teams, one of which has been working on long-term health care issues for more than two years. An invitation-only session will be held Sept. 17 at the State Capitol involving stakeholders from Vision Shared's Long-Term Care Task Force.

Participants will discuss **The Elder Economic Security Initiative™** (Initiative), which is an exciting new project that seeks to build economic security for older adults through a multi-pronged approach that includes organizing, advocacy and research. The Initiative enables policy makers, aging advocates and others to develop policies and programs to help seniors age with dignity while promoting their economic security.

"We recognize that West Virginia is looking down the barrel at a serious crunch in health care utilization by older citizens in the coming years," said Vision Shared President Juliet A. Terry. "Census predictions alone tell us that by 2030, almost one-fifth of West Virginia's population will be older than 65. We need to be proactive and arm ourselves with the best information possible so this state can ensure that our older citizens will get the care they need in the future."

A key component of the Initiative is the **Elder Economic Security Standard™ Index**, (Elder Index) a measure of well-being that determines the income and supports needed for older adults to live modestly depending on their health and life circumstances.

"The West Virginia Elder Economic Security Initiative will provide advocates, service providers, policy makers, and the public at-large with data on what elders need to age in place in their communities," said Stacy Sanders, associate Director of WOW's Elder Economic Security Initiative. "Wider Opportunities for Women is delighted to see West Virginia join its national efforts to promote economic security across and within the generations."

For information or media access, please contact Elizabeth Gaucher at (304) 340-7085 or info@visionshared.com.

Vision Shared Inc. is a statewide nonprofit, nonpartisan community and economic development organization. Its mission is to bridge social, political and economic gaps to bring people together and work on issues and needs affecting West Virginia. Its goals are to strengthen the economy, reshape communities, promote progressive government and improve the quality of life for West Virginians.