MOTIVATIONAL SPEECH

FOR

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**REVISED**

Thank you for being here and allowing me the chance to share an important message. You’ve probably heard, “Growing older is not for the faint of heart.” Issues present themselves that require sensible, effective solutions. As our world becomes increasingly complicated, it’s understandable that priorities shift and crucial issues can fall through the cracks, especially for a part of the population whose voices may not be heard, as they should be. To those of us dedicated to promoting the causes of our aging population, we realize this group deserves and requires a stake in their future. The **Senior Action Network** was formed as a matrix to provide support and the opportunity to come together as a productive movement. Seniors across the country must have a means to tell their personal stories, share their concerns, and work in unison with supporters like you to discover issues and implement solutions to problems we will all face sooner or later…like finding affordable senior housing, quality medical care, and other services that will insure that growing older can mean living with self-reliance and dignity.

Studies conducted by the Center for Applied Research (CFAR) show that housing plays a critical role in the well-being of America's seniors.  This organization is a platform for the coordination and delivery of long-term medical services and supports, which can help senior residents manage their health and maintain their independence.

Unfortunately, the irony is that seniors in lower to middle-income brackets find it increasingly difficult to afford adequate housing, health care, and necessities on their fixed monthly income.  According to AARP, over three million seniors in America live below the poverty level.  There are ten seniors on the waiting list for every affordable housing unit that becomes available. These statistics demonstrate a dire need to increase supplies of affordable senior housing and to invest in the preservation of those that currently exist

LeadingAge and Volunteers of America are committed to advocating on behalf of older Americans and have joined to form the SAN. As you can imagine this is an idea whose time has **arrived**. LeadingAge is an association of not-for-profit organizations representing the entire field of aging services. Volunteers of America is a national nonprofit organization providing more than 400 human services programs throughout the United States.

Every day we hear of too many startlingly real examples of what can go terribly wrong when apathy or inaction prevails.  If we organize with one voice, we can be successful in bringing awareness to these and other issues that impact the daily lives of seniors. The SAN will do just that. By signing up to advocate for yourself or a loved-one, you will be adding your critical voice to ours, and collectively we can help shape public policies that will ensure America's seniors will get the help they need and deserve.

Participating in the SAN won't take much of your time. We may ask you to take action on an issue by emailing, telephoning or mailing a letter to your representatives in Congress to support or oppose legislation. Your outreach will let lawmakers know that their constituents’ needs **must be** a priority.

Our aging populace is our greatest treasure and deserves an advocacy that supports their voices and the causes that, if we are lucky enough to attain equivalent seniority, will be for us as well.  So take a few minutes of your time and visit [www.seniorsactionnetwork.org](http://www.seniorsactionnetwork.org/) or text, "seniors" to 52886 in the SAN.

Thank you!