

## Preserve Funding for SHIPs

The Senate Appropriations Committee proposes a 100% cut to funding for State Health Insurance Assistance Programs. This would have a devastating impact on the **SHIIP**, the North Carolina **Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program** and its ability to assist the state's 1.8 million Medicare beneficiaries at a time when the number of people eligible for Medicare is growing and the Medicare program is becoming increasingly complex. Removing this program would eliminate the best and most reliable free and local resource that Medicare beneficiaries have in North Carolina and force consumers to utilize a federal resource.

### NCSHIIP Activities in 2016:

- **Helped North Carolina Medicare beneficiaries save \$44.3 million.**
- **Counseled more than 105,000 Medicare beneficiaries.**
- Served almost **21,000** Medicare beneficiaries with disabilities.
- Counseled more than **29,000** beneficiaries with incomes below 150% of federal poverty level.

### NCSHIIP is:

- **Unique.** NCSHIIP is the only organization in the state that provides unbiased, accurate, highly-personalized one-on-one counseling about Medicare by phone and in-person in all 100 counties in North Carolina.
- **Effective.** NCSHIIP helped save North Carolinians more than **\$44.3 million** on Medicare coverage and prescription drugs in 2015 alone. **This is close to the \$52 million that is appropriated for all SHIPs nationwide** that is being proposed for elimination in the President's Budget.
- **Cost-efficient.** NCSHIIP uses a small paid staff and a network of approximately 1,000 trained volunteer counselors to meet the needs of North Carolina's 1.8 million Medicare beneficiaries.
- **Dependable.** Local, state and federal agencies, members of the state legislature, members of Congress and their staff, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the Social Security Administration and other sources routinely refer beneficiaries to NCSHIIP. Beneficiaries often need help that cannot be provided by 1-800-Medicare or through online or printed materials.

With eliminated federal funding, NCSHIIP would be severely impacted and would not be able to provide the same high level of service, and partner agencies will have to find new ways to help beneficiaries who need Medicare information and counseling.