



Massachusetts  
Councils On Aging



# From Resources to Relationships: Why Councils on Aging and Senior Centers Matter

## MCOA Presenters

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# Massachusetts Councils on Aging:

## Your Statewide Partner in Serving Older Adults

- Nonprofit membership association for the 350 COAs in Massachusetts
- Empower and support COAs to advance the quality of life for older adults and caregivers
- Three key pillars of impact: Educate, Advocate, Collaborate





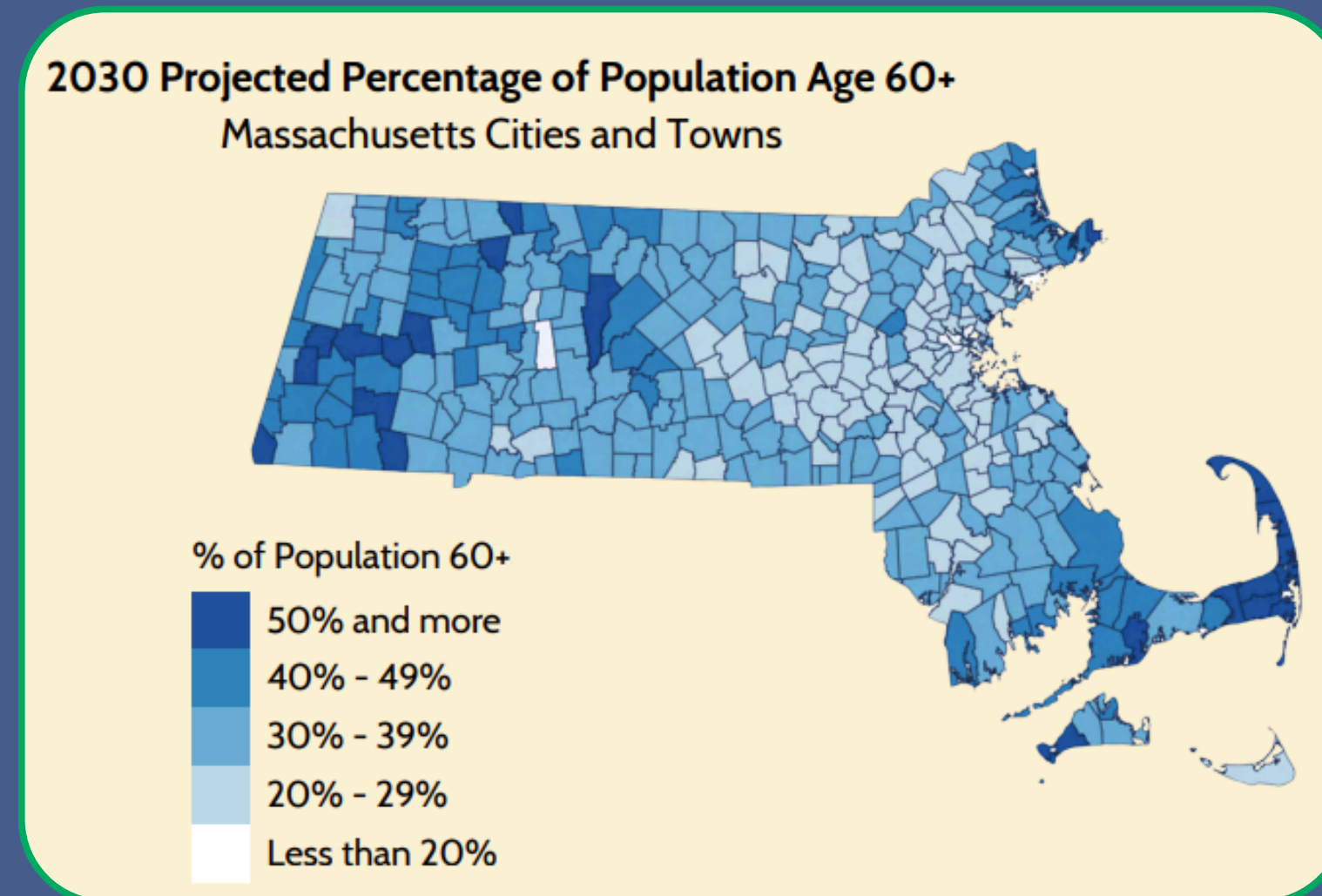
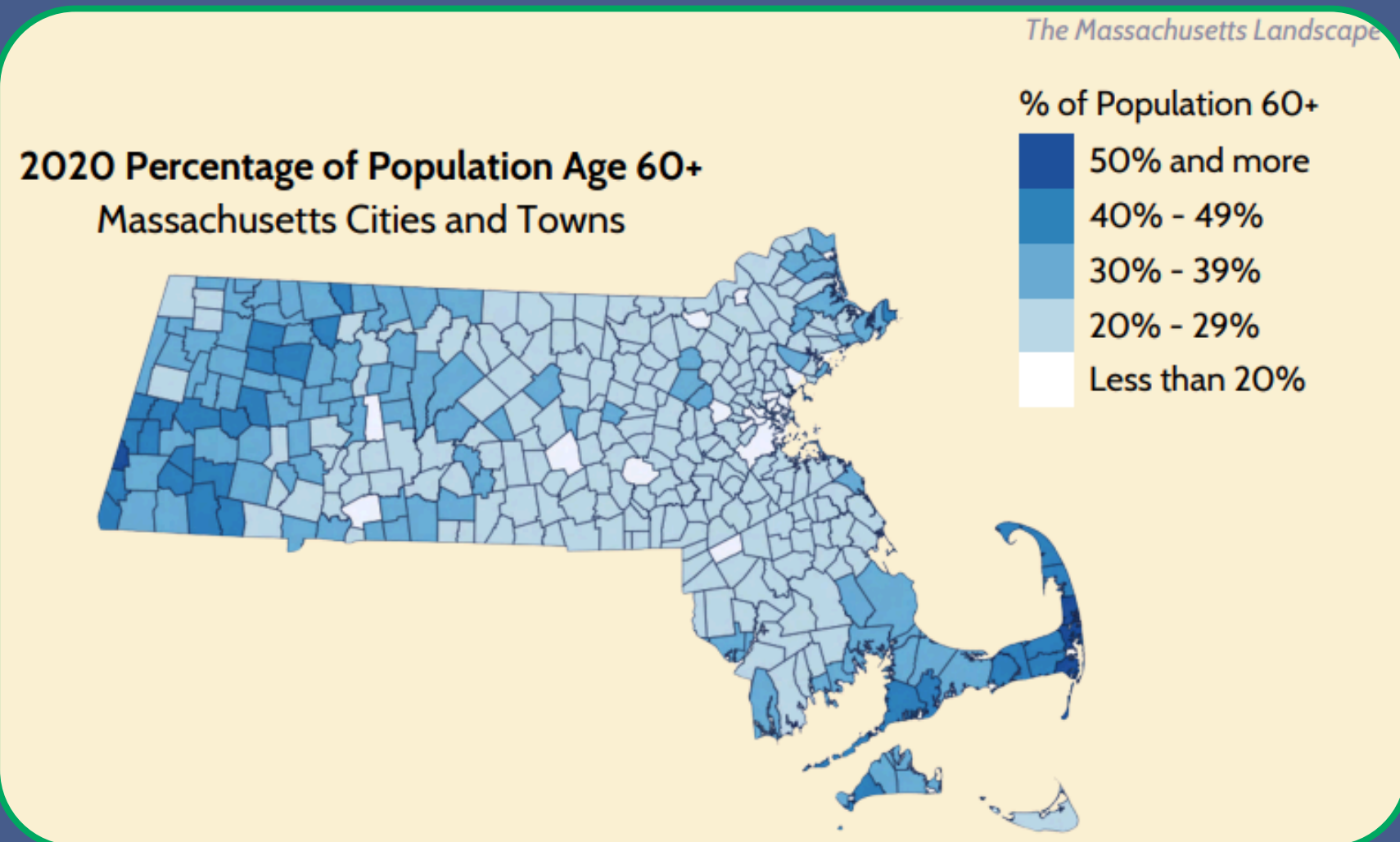
# What You'll Take Away Today:

- Understand the essential role COAs/Senior Centers play in community safety, health, and well-being
- Learn how MCOA strengthens the statewide COA network through advocacy, training, grants, and peer connection
- Highlight successful examples of municipal collaboration with COAs
- Recognize why demographics matter in planning for age- and dementia-friendly communities



# Massachusetts is Getting Older - Fast

Today, 1.7 million adults over the age of 60 call Massachusetts home — nearly a quarter of our population



# Older Adults Depend on Local Governments More Than Ever

- COAs have been essential community lifelines for over 50 years
- Rising demand for outreach, meals, transportation, caregiver support, and social connection
- Federal shifts push more responsibility onto local budgets





# Advocate: Turning Local Voices Into Statewide Action

- Serve as a collective voice for the statewide COA network
- Ensure COAs receive fair share of state funding for Formula Grant & Service Incentive Grant
- Monitor and shape legislation affecting older adults



# Adapting Quickly to Local Needs

- Monitor and shape legislation affecting older adults
- Member engagement and solution building
- Building Partnerships to respond to needs of the network, and to the needs of older adults





# Educate: Building Skilled Leaders for Stronger Communities

- Training Opportunities for COA Staff
- Professional Certification Program
- Peer-to-peer Learning & Support
- Resource Guides





# Statewide Recognition

## INNOVATION OF THE YEAR

We are thrilled to announce the criteria for this year's prestigious award, recognizing outstanding leaders in Councils on Aging (COA). This award celebrates those who have made exceptional contributions to their communities through innovative initiatives and exemplary leadership.



## DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR

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## Collaborate:

# Connecting Communities Through Partnership

- Key partner in the Massachusetts Aging Network
- Municipal input from COAs helps inform and shape state policy
- Build strategic partnerships to empower professionals serving older adults



# Reimagining Aging Across Massachusetts



# Age- & Dementia- Friendly Massachusetts

Massachusetts leads the nation in creating livable communities, with the reach of the age- and dementia-friendly movement spanning over 275 cities and towns across every region of the state, and continues to expand.

- 133 age-friendly communities (designated by AARP)
- 143 dementia-friendly communities (designated by MCOA)
- 84 combined age- and dementia- friendly communities



# Essential Services & Human Connection

- Outreach
  - Nutrition
  - Transportation
  - Health & Wellness
  - Social Connection
  - Recreation
  - Lifelong Learning
  - Civic Engagement
  - Caregiver Support
- And so much more!



# Modern, Inclusive, and Designed for Today's Older Adults



- Welcoming Places for All/Community Hubs
- Multigenerational
- Rebranding/Name change
- Virtual and Hybrid Programming
- Expanded Hours
- COA Collaboration



# Partnerships That Strengthen Communities



## Freetown

Town nurse and social worker attend lunches at the Senior Center, increasing access to health screenings and wellness education.



## Barnstable

Together with first responders and community partners, COA hosts an annual Community Safety Day event for older adults.



## Swampscott

COA partners with High School on intergenerational art projects, connecting older adults and students and bridging the generational divide.



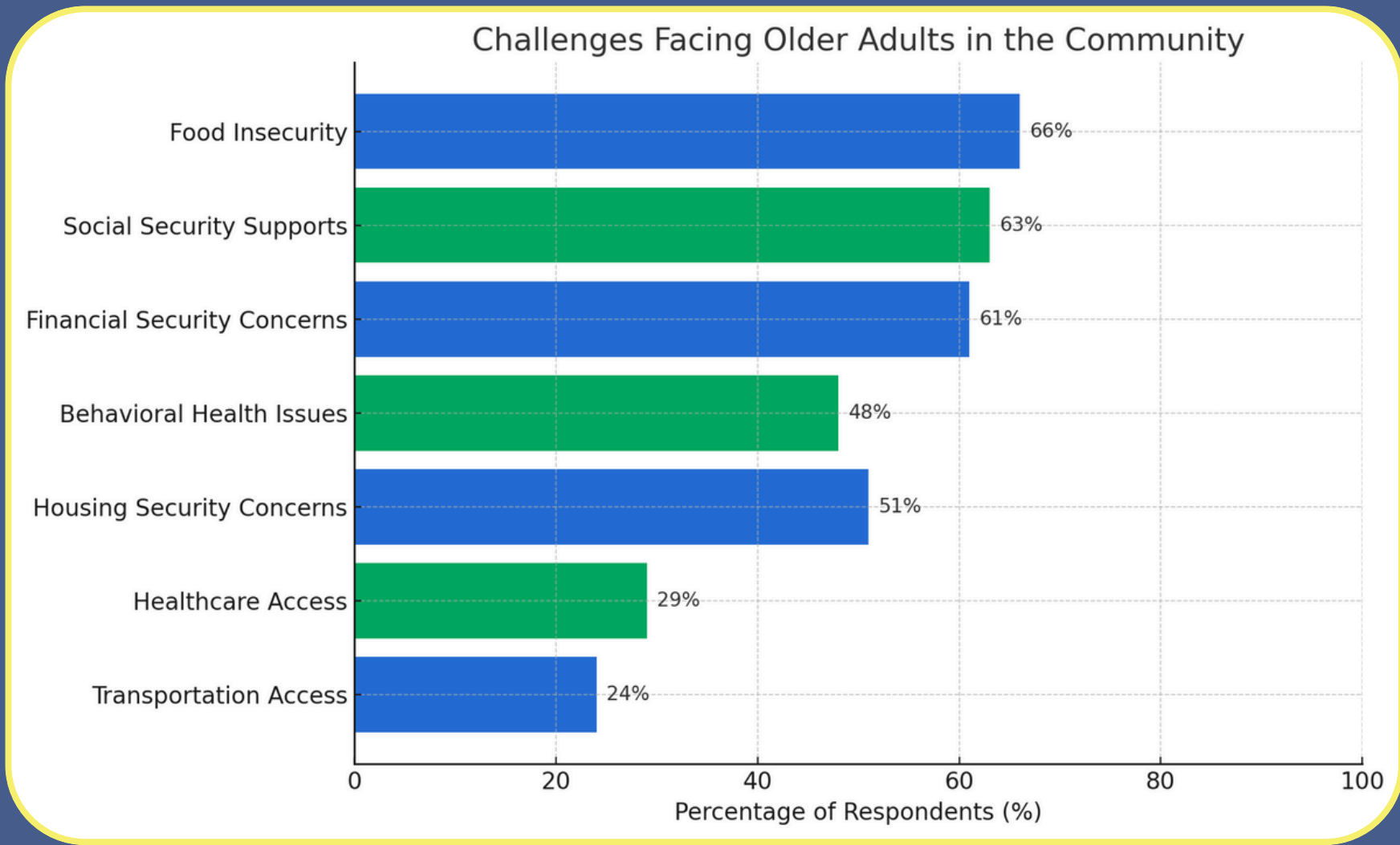


# REAL-WORLD IMPACTS OF FEDERAL ACTIONS AND POLICY CHANGES ON OLDER ADULTS IN MASSACHUSETTS



## Rising Demand, Limited Resources

- More older adults = more services needed
- Staffing and funding gaps
- Federal policy changes significantly impacting municipalities and older adults





# Strengthen and Support Your COA:



Meet your COA director and staff and look for opportunities to collaborate and support their work



Engage in and support Age/Dementia-Friendly efforts in your community



Review your community's Healthy Aging Data Report



Connect older adults you meet with the COA



# Resources



\* <https://mcoaonline.org/>  
MCOA website

\* <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/reimagine-aging-2030-the-massachusetts-plan>  
ReiMAging Aging 2030 website

\* <https://mahealthyagingcollaborative.org/data-report/explore-the-profiles/>  
Healthy Aging Data Reports



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Together, we are  
reimagining aging  
in Massachusetts.

Thank you!

[MCOAONLINE.ORG](https://mcoaonline.org)