



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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## **COUNTY OFFICIAL TESTIFIES BEFORE U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE** *Director of Aging & Independence Service Spotlights Civic Engagement for Older Adults*

Pamela B. Smith, the director of Aging & Independence Services, a division of the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), was invited to testify today (May 3) before the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging about options to improve the Aging Network for the Baby Boomer generation.

She referred to older adults as the “nation’s only growing natural resource,” and emphasized the successes the County of San Diego has had in challenging older adults to be part of the solution to some of our tough social issues, such as foster care and caregiver needs.

“This is really about a different way of thinking; a paradigm shift on how we view our later years,” Smith told the committee. “We often need more resources to solve community problems, but those resources don’t always have to be money. They could be the army of older adults we have assembled just waiting for their opportunity.”

Smith also talked about the successful outcomes from programs in San Diego County that engage seniors, including San Pasqual Academy, intergenerational programs such as Senior Mentoring for CalWORKS families, and the First Five Intergenerational Program.

Last year, Smith participated in a National Council on Aging Committee on Promising Practices in Civic Engagement. She has been active locally and nationally in promoting meaningful opportunities for older adults, particularly programs featuring intergenerational activities.

HHSA Aging & Independence Services (AIS) is the primary provider in the county of services for older adults, persons with disabilities and their families. For more information about AIS, call 1-800-510-2020.

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