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Preventing crimes against older persons

- 1 WHEREAS older people often feel vulnerable to becoming victims of crime;
- 2 WHEREAS older adults experience a higher incidence of impairments which affect their hearing, vision, and mobility and thus are more likely to feel vulnerable;
- 3 WHEREAS older crime victims often suffer greater physical, emotional, and financial harm than younger people;
- 4 WHEREAS 43 percent of older households are single persons living alone, 75 percent of whom are women;
- 5 WHEREAS fear of crime tends to cause older persons to limit their activities and thus diminish their quality of life;
- 6 WHEREAS law enforcement and other related professionals, including social service representatives and district attorneys, may lack sensitivity to the concerns and needs of older persons, especially women, minorities, and those with disabilities; and
- 7 WHEREAS older people are valuable and contributing members of their communities;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the 1995 White House Conference on Aging to support policies that:

- 8 Encourage national legislation that imposes serious penalties and restitution, and encourage stronger enforcement of existing regulations for crimes against the elderly;
- 9 Encourage private/public partnerships to initiate a national education campaign focused on empowering older persons and providing them with information to avoid becoming victims of crime, abuse, fraud, neglect, and exploitation;
- 10 Develop and implement training programs to educate police and other public safety personnel, social service professionals, and district attorneys to increase their sensitivity to the special needs of older persons and enhance their ability to work with older crime victims, especially women, minorities, and persons with disabilities;
- 11 Continue to develop and maintain community programs such as Triad, Neighborhood Watch, and others funded and implemented by a consortium of government and private entities, to allay fear of crime and to enhance the quality of community life;

- 12 Encourage and train older persons to work with younger members of their communities via mentoring programs, fund-raising, community clean-up programs, and other activities that improve their communities and lessen the likelihood of crime;
- 13 Develop victim assistance programs including increased training and use of Senior Services Officers to work with older potential victims and victims of abuse, neglect, fraud, exploitation, and other crimes;
- 14 Encourage offices of State attorneys general to continue and/or implement consumer education programs for older persons;
- 15 Encourage research to provide current information about crime, abuse, neglect, exploitation, victim demographics, and the basis of fear of crime in older persons.

