



## CITY OF ELMIRA NEW YORK

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**Susan J. Skidmore**  
Mayor

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August 12, 2013

Beth Finkel  
State Director  
AARP  
780 3rd Ave - 33rd floor  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Ms. Finkel:

I am writing this letter to express our interest in applying for membership in the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. The City of Elmira is committed to a process of continual improvement to support active and healthy aging and sustain economic and social vitality and is already an active partner and participant with the Chemung County Department of Aging and Long Term Care. We recognize the importance of encouraging and promoting age-friendly planning and policies to address changing demographics and to enhance independent living within our City and County.

The Chemung County Department of Aging and Long Term Care launched a Community Empowerment initiative with county-wide support in 2009. Over 500 residents participated in a year-long planning process to identify and pursue activities that promote successful aging and improve quality of life for all ages. Over 180 action plans are underway to improve quality of life in the areas of civic engagement, health care and human services, economic development, housing and transportation. Creating Healthy Places to Live, Work and Play, a broad-based community coalition of over 30 partners that represents some of the initiatives promoted by Community Empowerment, is actively pursuing sustainable policy systems and environmental changes that make Chemung County a healthier place to live.

A strong framework has already been completed and we will begin to build upon that to address the World Health Organization's eight domains that help influence the health and quality of life of older people. We look forward to being part of this global network of communities who are committed to giving their older residents the opportunity to live rewarding, productive and safe lives.

Sincerely,

Susan J. Skidmore  
Mayor  
City of Elmira