January 17, 2018

Michael E. Festa  
State Director, AARP MA  
One Beacon Street, Suite 2310  
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Mr. Festa,

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is pleased to submit this application to join the network of AARP Age-Friendly States and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

As I said during my State of the Commonwealth address last year, we must think differently about how to support and engage older residents if our communities are to continue to benefit from their wisdom and contributions. As part of our efforts, I established a Council to Address Aging in Massachusetts. One of their early recommendations was to become an age-friendly state.

Older adults are the largest and fastest-growing segment of the U.S. population and they will make up 23% of the Commonwealth’s population by 2035. Many of our older adults have the time, energy and talent available to start a second or third career, volunteer in their community, become a mentor or pursue an unfulfilled passion. By designation as an Age-Friendly State, Massachusetts embraces the opportunity to promote and celebrate aging.

The AARP/WHO framework comports well with our approach in Massachusetts. We fully embrace the opportunity to build on leadership provided at the local level and to strengthen the many efforts and partnerships forged in the last several years to expand age-friendly communities throughout the Commonwealth. We plan to promote and build on work that 88 communities have already commenced, to honor the diversity of communities across the Commonwealth, and to ensure the voices of older adults and communities are at the center of our effort. We believe this work is best driven by local municipalities and organizations in partnership with the state.

Our collaboration with AARP Massachusetts is important to our state’s efforts in this area. This application reflects that spirit of cooperation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Charles D. Baker  
Governor