

# The Columbus Dispatch

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Opinion

## **Editorial: Delaware County levy meets needs of elderly**

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Ask anyone approaching or enjoying their “golden years” and they’ll tell you they want to remain independent and in their own home as long as they can.

But the truth is being independent is a relative term, and for those of retirement age it can require a little bit of help that isn’t always available from family and friends.

That’s where organizations like SourcePoint come in. As Delaware County has grown, and especially as its population of older adults has exploded, SourcePoint has been working for 26 years to provide seniors with services enabling them to “Thrive after 55” and stay in their own homes.

Delaware County has long been one of the state’s fastest-growing counties, and across the nation, the share of population growth among those 65 and older is increasing at higher levels than the general populace. In Delaware County, that has been even more pronounced, with the county just north of Columbus seeing as much as an 83 percent increase in those 65 and older in the decade ending in 2010, while the state’s overall senior-citizen population grew by 7.6 percent and total growth was stagnant.

As more older Ohioans have made their retirement homes in Delaware County, SourcePoint has grown its services to meet their needs, providing help at no charge to about 40 percent who qualify for free care, receiving full payment from 20 percent of those served and accepting slide-fee scale payments from the remaining 40 percent.

Keeping pace with local need, SourcePoint continues to provide a variety of services with no waiting lists in a coordinated system that provides some services directly and seamlessly contracting with other service providers as needed. Meals

on Wheels and other in-home care to homebound seniors are among services SourcePoint provides. For more-active seniors, enrichment and health-promotion programs help improve their quality of life.

Delaware County voters have an opportunity on the May 8 ballot to maintain SourcePoint as a valuable community resource by approving a five-year renewal of a 1.2-mill senior-services levy, along with a 0.1-mill addition. The existing levy costs \$32.13 a year per \$100,000 of property valuation, with the increase adding another \$3.50. This is a good investment for helping older residents stay healthy, and we encourage voters to vote “yes.”



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