

May 2, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran, Chair  
The Honorable Patrick Leahy,  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen, Chair  
The Honorable Nita Lowey, Ranking Member  
U. S. House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cochran, Ranking Member Leahy, Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Lowey:

The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) is a coalition of 71 national nonprofit organizations concerned with the well-being of America's older population and committed to representing their interests in the policy-making arena.

As the U.S. Senate and House Committees on Appropriations continue to work toward finalizing the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Labor-HHS appropriations bill, LCAO urges you to prioritize investments in programs that enhance the dignity, health, and independence of older adults, such as the Older Americans Act (OAA) and other critical aging programs. Additionally, we urge you to reject cuts to key aging services programs outlined in President Trump's \$17.9 billion FY 2017 supplemental spending request. In particular, we oppose the proposed roughly \$7.3 billion cut to Labor-HHS programs and \$2.7 billion cut to Housing and Transportation programs.

While not a comprehensive list, we specifically and strongly oppose the Administration's proposal to virtually eliminate the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), the Medicare State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) and the Senior Corps programs (Foster Grandparents Program, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program and the Senior Companion Program). We also strongly oppose the significant cuts requested for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), and the Legal Services Corporation. All of these federal programs provide cost-effective support to older adults, caregivers and the community-based, local agencies that coordinate and deliver these services that help vulnerable seniors age with dignity and independence in their homes and communities.

Enclosed is LCAO's September 2016 letter to House and Senate appropriators responding to the committee-passed Labor-HHS appropriations bills in both chambers. We urge lawmakers to soundly reject any cuts to critical programs that support older adults and prioritize the funding levels outlined in the attached for the remainder of FY 2017.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Smith Sloan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Katie Smith Sloan

Chair

Cc: Members of the U.S. Senate and House Appropriations Committee