Date

The Honorable (First Name) (Last Name)

(United States Senate/U.S. House of Representatives)

(Address/Office Numbers) (Senate Office Building/House Office Building)

Washington, DC (Zip Code)

Dear Senator/Representative (Last Name):

I am writing you on behalf of the ## seniors we serve in [town/city/counties] to thank you for your support of [program name], and to outline the three things you can do through your work in Washington to greatly improve the lives of your constituents. I would also like to take this opportunity to invite you to visit our program and help prepare and/or deliver meals to our senior clients. I am happy to work with a member of your staff to arrange a date and time that accommodates your very busy schedule. They should feel free to reach out to me directly at [email and phone number] as well.

As a [program director/volunteers/community member], I’ve been able to see firsthand the impact that Meals on Wheels and congregate programs have in our community and the overall health and well-being of those we serve. [Include anecdote from client/volunteer route/relative receiving meals/other work].

Before the end of the fiscal year, we need to ensure that Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Programs like Meals on Wheels are adequately funded, supported and protected from future harm. To do this, you and your colleagues in Congress can take action in three ways:

1. Fund OAA Nutrition Programs at the President's FY 2017 request of $848M. The network is currently serving 21 million fewer meals to seniors than in 2005 and at the same time, the need has never been greater.
2. Pass the DELIVER (*Delivering Elderly Lunches and Increasing Volunteer Engagement and Reimbursements*) Act. This bipartisan legislation seeks to bring equity and fairness to the millions of volunteers who day-in and day-out help care for our nation’s most vulnerable citizens by increasing the standard charitable mileage rate from 14 cents per mile, which has remained unchanged for nearly two decades, to the standard business rate of 54 cents.
3. Protect the OAA and the seniors it serves by ending sequestration and replacing it with a balanced plan that recognizes the significant cuts already made to Non-Defense Discretionary Programs.

There is no doubt that the nutrition programs authorized under the OAA have a huge social and economic impact across the country and on our nation’s fiscal future. ***In fact, one year of Meals on Wheels is about the same cost as just one day in a hospital or less than ten days in a long-term care facility.*** With more than 12,000 Americans turning 60 every day, we must ensure that the preventative, cost-effective systems are in place to support our rapidly aging population. Investing further in programs like Meals on Wheels provides a win-win-win all around – for seniors, for taxpayers, and for our nation.

Again, I hope you will consider joining me on a [meal delivery/site visit] so that you can see our program in action and experience firsthand how we’re delivering so much more than a meal. The seniors of [city, town, county, state], our program and our volunteers and supporters are counting on your efforts to increase funding and protect these vital programs today and in the future.

Sincerely,

Name

Title