

May 24, 2017

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen Chairman House Appropriations Committee United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole Chairman House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education, and Related Agencies United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515 The Honorable Nita Lowey Ranking Member House Appropriations Committee United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro Ranking Member House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education, and Related Agencies United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Frelinghuysen and Cole and Ranking Members Lowey and DeLauro:

On behalf of our two organizations, our respective members and the millions of seniors they serve nationwide, we sincerely thank you for your leadership and longstanding support of the Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Programs, including the \$3 million increase provided in the FY 2017 Omnibus Appropriations Bill.

It is in that spirit that we urge you to build on the bipartisan, bicameral support that exists for these programs and to fund them at a total level of \$874.6 million in FY 2018. This represents the authorized funding levels for the Congregate, Home-Delivered and Nutrition Services Incentive Programs as unanimously approved by Congress and signed into law last year.

We also respectfully request that you maintain the existing funding level of \$1.7 billion for the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG), which includes about \$30 million for congregate and home-delivered meals. As you know, the President's Budget would eliminate all funding for SSBG. Similarly, two other block grants proposed for elimination, the Community Development and Community Services Block Grants (CDBG and CSBG, respectively), also provide important funding for senior nutrition. We urge at least level funding for these important programs.

We make this request knowing that you are already acutely aware of both the social and economic value that OAA Nutrition Programs provide for the millions of seniors they serve each year. By delivering nutritious meals, friendly visits, and safety and wellness checks each day, these programs produce concrete results: they are enabling independence and improving the health of our nation's most vulnerable. At the same time, they are saving significant taxpayer dollars and reducing healthcare expenditures by preventing unnecessary trips to the emergency room, admissions and readmissions to hospitals and delaying or eliminating altogether the need for nursing home care. As an example, Meals on Wheels' clients report fewer falls, which cost our nation \$31 billion annually in direct Medicare expenses.

OAA congregate and home-delivered meal programs are serving every state and congressional district in this nation. More than 2.4 million seniors receive nutritious meals every year, each meal representing half or more of

their total daily food intake. Those served often have multiple chronic conditions, take six or more medications daily and are functionally impaired. In addition, they are primarily women, 76 and older, who live alone. Significant numbers live in rural areas, are living in poverty and belong to a minority group. In short, OAA Nutrition Programs are effectively reaching our most vulnerable, at-risk seniors.

For both congregate and home-delivered clients, the companionship provided is critical to reducing isolation, which, as with a nutritious meal, is vitally important to health and quality of life. Seniors at a congregate program, for example, have a daily opportunity for socialization with their peers, preventing isolation. For home-delivered meal recipients, the volunteer or staff member delivering the meal may be the only person they see all day. These programs continue to meet Congress' intent and the exact purposes as outlined in the OAA by addressing the unique social and nutritional needs of seniors.

As noted earlier, we recognize and sincerely appreciate the past increases provided for OAA Nutrition Programs but know we need to go much further. Year after year, our programs are serving fewer seniors and meals while the need and demand is escalating at an unprecedented pace. This growing gap is due to declining public funding, stagnant private funding, and rising food and transportation costs. Since 2005, the OAA nutrition network has served 23 million fewer meals all while waiting lists continue to mount in every state. We must at a minimum stave off this continuous decline. And, increasing funding for the congregate and home-delivered meals programs in FY 2018 would prevent further erosion of service at a time when the need has never been greater.

As your Committee and Subcommittee craft and consider the FY 2018 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill, we again ask that you fund the OAA Nutrition Programs at the level of \$874.6 million while maintaining existing funding levels for SSBG, CDBG and CSBG. With more than 10,000 seniors turning 65 every day, now is the time to boost investments in these proven and cost-effective programs.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues throughout the FY 2018 appropriations process.

Sincerely,

Abert B. Alamento

Robert B. Blancato **Executive Director** National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)

**Contact Information:** 1612 K Street NW, Suite 200 Washington, DC 20006 202-682-6899 www.nanasp.org

Elli Hollander

Ellie Hollander President and CEO Meals on Wheels America

Contact Information: 1550 Crystal Drive, Suite 1004 Arlington, VA 22202 703-548-5558 www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org

cc: Members of the House Appropriations Committee

Enclosed: Bipartisan Dear Colleague Letter with 83 signatures calling on the House LHHS Subcommittee to protect and increase funding for OAA Title III Programs; bipartisan Dear Colleague Letter with 168 signatures calling on the House THUD Subcommittee to provide robust funding for CDBG

# Congress of the United States Washington, DC 20515

April 6, 2017

The Honorable Tom Cole Chairman Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education H-307, The Capitol Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro Ranking Member Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education 1016 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

Thank you for your ongoing support for programs that help older Americans live active and independent lives. As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 appropriations bill for the U.S. Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, we urge you to prioritize programs under Title III of the Older Americans Act (OAA) that help older Americans age successfully at home and in their communities by funding those programs at the authorized levels.

As you know, OAA programs play an essential role in advancing the health and well-being of older adults. These programs provide millions of American seniors, many of whom are low-income, the resources necessary to reduce hunger and isolation, as well as allow them to maintain their dignity, health, and independence. These services enable seniors to live in their own homes while saving taxpayer dollars through reduced hospital and institutional care.

The recent bipartisan reauthorization of the Older Americans Act included specific increases in funding authorization for these programs. We respectfully request funding that reflects those authorized amounts for the following Older Americans Act Title III Programs within the Administration for Community Living's (ACL) budget for the Administration on Aging (AoA).

### OAA Title III B Home and Community-Based Supportive Services (HCBS):

The Home and Community-Based Supportive Services program, authorized in Title III, Part B, of the Older Americans Act (OAA), provides critical resources to states and local Area Agencies on Aging. Community-based agencies rely on these resources to offer an array of supportive services that are essential to keeping older adults in their homes and communities, including inhome assistance and wrap-around services, adult day care, transportation services including to meal sites and medical appointments, access to legal assistance and elder justice assistance, case management and care coordination services, and many others. Title III B services are essential to enabling many older adults and caregivers to access other OAA programs, such as congregate and home delivered meals. Overall, Title III, Part B, funding is used to deliver more than 20 distinctive services to help older adults and caregivers.

For these reasons we respectfully ask that you appropriate \$364.5 million for the HCBS program, the amount unanimously approved in the 2016 OAA reauthorization. When older adults are able to live independently, our country's communities are strengthened and taxpayers and families avoid paying for more expensive acute health care and long-term care services.

#### OAA Title III C Congregate Nutrition Services and Home-delivered Nutrition Services:

In 2014, over 2.4 million seniors received 80 million nutritious meals at senior centers and charitable community organizations, with public-private partnerships like Meals on Wheels delivering 138 million meals to mobility-restricted seniors. For the majority of these seniors, the meals provided more than one-half their food for the entire day. These programs, however, are more than just food. Home-delivered nutrition services often provide participants their only opportunity for face-to-face contact or conversation and two-thirds of congregate meal participants report that their health has improved because they attend lunch programs.

It is for these reasons we respectfully request the subcommittee include \$470 million for ACL Congregate nutrition services and \$237.2 million for Home-delivered nutrition services. These vital programs authorized under the Older Americans Act help fulfill our nation's commitment to maintaining dignity and independent living regardless of income or location.

#### OAA III E National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP):

The National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) offers a range of supports to family caregivers, including assistance in accessing services such as respite care, counseling, support groups, and caregiver training. Every year, caregivers provide over \$480 billion worth of unpaid care to older adults and people with disabilities. The NFCSP provides essential support to the network of informal caregivers that are and essential component to long-term care delivery in the country. We request that you fund Title III, Part E at \$157.6 million.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and we look forward to working with you to make sure America's older adults receive the supportive services they need to live independently.

Sincerely,

SUZANNE BONAMICI Member of Congress

THEODORE E. DEUTCH Member of Congress

DAVE LOEBSACK Member of Congress

Robert C. "Bobby"' Scott Member of Congress

Rick Larsen Member of Congress

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Martha McSally Member of Congress

**Brian Higgins** 

Member of Congress

Alma S. Adams Member of Congress

Peter A. DeFazio Member of Congress



Elise M. Stefanik Member of Congress

Doris Matsui

Doris Matsui Member of Congress

Bill Foster Member of Congress

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Frank A. LoBiondo Member of Congress

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Danny K. Davis Member of Congress

Gwen S. Moore Member of Congress

Earl Blumenauer Member of Congress

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Mike Thompson Member of Congress

Scott H. Peters Member of Congress

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Jared Polis Member of Congress

Michelle Lujan Grisham Member of Congress

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Raúl M. Grijalva Member of Congress

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Bonnie Watson Coleman Member of Congress

Olice L. Hastings

Alcee L. Hastings Member of Congress

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Carol Shea-Porter Member of Congress

James P. McGovern Member of Congress

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Terri A. Sewell Member of Congress



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David N. Cicilline Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Josh Gottheimer Member of Congress

Robin L. Kelly Member of Congress

Ruben Gallego

Member of Congress

André Carson Member of Congress

John Convers, Jr.

Member of Congress

William R. Keating Member of Congress

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John Garamendi Member of Congress

Nydia M. Velázquez Member of Congress

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Vvette D. Clarke Member of Congress

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John B. Larson Member of Congress

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Jared Huffman Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier Member of Congress

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Niki Tsongas 🥢 Member of Congress

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Barbara Lee Member of Congress

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Joe Courtney Member of Congress

Brendan F. Boyle Member of Congress

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Cheri Bustos Member of Congress

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Steve Cohen Member of Congress

Ron Kind

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John K. Delaney Member of Congress

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John Yarmuth Member of Congress

Frank Pallone, Jr. Member of Congress

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Thomas R. Suozzi Member of Congress

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Tony Cárdenas Member of Congress

Brenda L. Lawrence Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin

Member of Congress

Lois Frankel Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr.

Member of Congress

# Congress of the United States Washington, DC 20515

April 3, 2017

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart Chairman Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies 2358-A Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 The Honorable David Price Ranking Member Subcommittee on Transportation Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies 1016 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Diaz-Balart and Ranking Member Price:

As the subcommittee develops its FY2018 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we respectfully urge you to prioritize commitment for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, one of the most effective federal programs for growing local economies and for providing a lifeline to families and communities, with proven results. We request the subcommittee provide robust funding for CDBG.

Since FY 2005, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has collected accomplishment data for the CDBG program. The data highlight the program's flexibility to design and implement strategies tailored to meet local needs and priorities. It has provided funds in every state, including housing investments, public infrastructure improvements, and economic development, while also providing public services, including services for seniors, youth, the disabled, and employment training.

Despite being a key tool for aiding our communities, the CDBG program, like many programs, has taken a share of deep cuts in recent years, falling substantially—by nearly \$1.4 billion since FY2001. While the program helps more than 1,200 cities, counties, states, and rural areas meet the needs of low- and moderate-income people and communities, funding cuts have severely weakened the ability of grantees to revitalize their communities and respond to local need. We share your commitment to the most effective use of taxpayer dollars, and believe that these grants have proven highly effective. Based on the data that grantees have reported to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development over the past nine years (FY2005 – FY2016), CDBG has:

- Helped over 1.3 million low- and moderate-income persons through single-family, owneroccupied rehabilitation, homeownership assistance, energy-efficient improvements, and leadbased abatement, among other activities;
- Created or retained **387,109** jobs for low- and moderate-income people through a variety of economic development activities;
- Benefited over 42 million low- and moderate-income persons through public improvements including senior centers, child care centers, and centers for people with disabilities;
- Benefited over 133 million low- and moderate-income persons through public services such as employment training, meals and other services to the elderly, services for abused and neglected children, assistance to local food banks, and other services;

- Helped Seniors Live Independently. CDBG funds are used to rehabilitate the homes of low- and moderate-income elderly persons to allow them to age in place, thereby, avoiding costly assisted living and nursing home care. CDBG provides resources to Meals on Wheels and other local food programs to ensure our low- and moderate-income seniors receive daily nourishment and contact. Further, CDBG funds are used to build community centers to allow seniors to receive health and recreational services to stay engaged and healthy;
- Strengthened Families and Communities through Homeownership. CDBG funds are used to
  assist credit worthy, working families with down payment and closing cost assistance to purchase
  a home. Homeownership stabilizes neighborhoods, allows families to build assets, and adds to the
  local tax base;
- Created Safer Communities. Local communities use CDBG to work with local police departments and neighborhood leaders to fight crime and make neighborhoods safer places to live and work by creating and expanding neighborhood watch groups, making safety improvements to homes and businesses, and encouraging local police sub-stations to move into high crime areas;
- Invested in Our Next Generation. Local communities use CDBG funds to provide afterschool programs to low-income children, summer jobs for low-income youth, and build recreation centers to provide a safe outlet for learning, sports and personal growth.

Additionally, every \$1.00 of CDBG leverages an additional \$3.65 in non-CDBG funding.

CDBG makes its way into the local economy through an extensive network of local organizations and remains a lifeline for families and communities. It is one federal program that touches the lives of nearly every American in some fashion. Over 7,200 communities have access to the funds and rely on the program to enhance their life and community. **Every State, Territory, and Congressional District receives or has access to CDBG funds.** The pressing need in the current economy for these funds remains critical.

While we understand the difficult fiscal decisions we must make in Washington, we appreciate your consideration of this important request and strongly urge you to support at least \$3.3 billion for the CDBG program in FY18 to help grow local economies.

Sincerely,

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Robert A. Brady Member of Congress

Peter T. King Member of Congress

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Lou Barletta Member of Congress

Maxine Waters Member of Congress

James P. McGovern Member of Congress

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Gregory Meeks Member of Congress

Michael R. June Beatty

Member of Congress

Mark Takano Member of Congress

Michael E. Capuano Member of Congress

John Convers J Member of Congress



Ed Perlmutter Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney Member of Congress

Richard E. Neal Member of Congress

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Chellie Pingree Member of Congress

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Paul Tonko Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton Member of Congress

Gwen Moore Member of Congress

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John K. Delaney Member of Congress

C.K. Butterfield

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John Garamendi

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Juan Vargas

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Yvette D. Clarke Member of Congress

Jenry Cuellar Member of Congress

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Suzan K. DelBene Member of Congress

Julia Brownley Member of Congress

Joe Courtney Member of Congress

Nydia M. Velazquez

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Lois Frankel Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr. Member of Congress

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David Scott

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Carol Shea-Porter Member of Congress

Kathleen M. Rice

Kathleen M. Rice Member of Congress

Seth Moulton Member of Congress

Ruben Gallego Member of Congress

Daniel Lipinski Member of Congress

Wm. Lacy Clay

Member of Congress

Sander M. Levin Member of Congress

Brian Higgins Member of Congress

John A. Yarmuth

Member of Congress

Mark Pocan Member of Congress

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Tom O'Haller

Tom O'Halleran Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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Stephanie Murphy Member of Congress

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Frank A. LoBiondo Member of Congress

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**Bill Foster** Member of Congress

Ann McLane Kuster Member of Congress

Peter A. DeFazio

Member of Congress

Emanuel Cleaver

Member of Congress

Mike Thompson Member of Congress

Steve Stivers Member of Congress

Frank Pallone, Jr. Member of Congress

Keith Ellison Member of Congress

Colleen Hanabusa Member of Congress

Elizabeth Esty

Member of Congress

Theodore E. Deutch Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch

Member of Congress

Ben Ray Luján Member of Congress

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Joaquin Castro Member of Congress

Charlie Crist Member of Congress

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Daniel T. Kildee Member of Congress

Brenda L. Lawrence Member of Congress

Grace F. Napolitano Member of Congress

Raúl M. Grijalva

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Dennis A. Ross Member of Congress

Gene Green Member of Congress

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Marc A. Veaser Member of Congress

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Debbie Wasserman Schultz Member of Congress

Raul Ruiz Member of Congress

Jared Huffman

Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat Member of Congress

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Pete Sessions Member of Congress

Kathy Castor Member of Congress

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Michelle Lujan Grisham Member of Congress

Barbara Comstock Member of Congress

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Gerald E. Connolly Member of Congress

Anthony Brown

Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis Member of Congress

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Roger Williams

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Dina Titus Member of Congress

Adam Smith Member of Congress

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Rosa L. DeLauro Member of Congress

David Loebsack Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney Member of Congress

Joseph Crowley Member of Congress

Bonnie Watson Coleman Member of Congress

Michael F. Doyle Member of Congress

Stacey F. Plaskett Member of Congress

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Scott Peters Member of Congress

Beto O'Rourke Member of Congress

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Jud Chu Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren Member of Congress

Steve Pearce Member of Congress

Jacky Rosen Member of Congress

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Anna G. Eshoo Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

Carlo Member of Congress

Barbara Lee Member of Congress

Adam B. Schiff Member of Congress

Vicente Gonzalez Member of Congress

Alma S. Adams Member of Congress

Ro Khanna M.C. Member of Congress

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.

Member of Congress

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Cheri Bustos Member of Congress

Kurt Schrader Member of Congress

Bradley S. Schneider Member of Congress

Luis V. Gutiérrez Member of Congress

Glenn 'GT' Thompson Member of Congress

Norma J. Torres Member of Congress

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Frederica S. Wilson Member of Congress

Brian J. Mast

Member of Congress

Josh Gottheimer Member of Congress

Brad Sherman Member of Congress

Brendan F. Boyle

Member of Congress

Bobby L.

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Member of Congress

Daniel M. Donovan, Jr. Member of Congress

Stephen Kaught

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William R. Keating Member of Congress

Can Brooks

Susan W. Brooks Member of Congress