



April 12, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
H-232, The Capitol
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
H-204, The Capitol
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan, Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leaders Schumer and Pelosi:

On behalf of our organizations, the local community-based senior nutrition programs we represent and the millions of individuals they serve nationwide, we express our sincere appreciation to you for your leadership and bipartisan efforts in providing the \$59 million increase for Older Americans Act (OAA) Home-Delivered and Congregate Nutrition Programs in the FY 2018 Omnibus Appropriations Bill. In addition, we thank you for increasing funding for other OAA programs, including supportive services, caregiver supports, and elder abuse prevention, and preserving the Community Development, Community Services and Social Services Block Grants, upon which many local organizations rely to deliver nutritious meals, opportunities for socialization and safety checks to seniors in need every day.

Federal funding is the foundation for OAA programs, which have provided critical social and nutrition services for seniors aged 60 and older in every state and congressional district for more than 50 years. The home-delivered and congregate meals and other services supported through the OAA are providing a significant social and economic return on investment by enabling our nation's most vulnerable seniors to remain healthier and independent at home, where they want to be, and out of costlier hospitals and nursing home settings often paid for in part through Medicare and Medicaid. The OAA Nutrition Program also represents one of the best examples of a successful public-private partnership, in which every federal dollar is matched with about three dollars from other sources. With more Americans living longer, and millions of seniors struggling with hunger and isolation, now is the time to continue investments in proven, cost-effective community-based programs, like those authorized by the OAA.

Again, we thank you for your support and for providing vital and necessary funding increases that will help deliver the basic living need of nutrition to seniors across the country as well as reduce the number of individuals on waiting lists for services. We look forward to building on the bipartisan work achieved over the past year and carrying it throughout the FY 2019 appropriations process.

Sincerely,



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



Ellie Hollander
President and CEO
Meals on Wheels America

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