



April 12, 2018

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor-HHS-Education, and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor-HHS-Education, and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Shelby and Blunt and Ranking Members Leahy and Murray:

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.

As you know, 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 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.

It is in this spirit that we ask you to continue building on the bipartisan, bicameral support that exists for these programs and increase funding in the next fiscal year. Specifically, as you consider appropriations for FY 2019 under the terms of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, **we urge you to provide a \$100 million increase for the OAA Nutrition Program – Home-Delivered and Congregate – for a total of \$996.7 million.** 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 that benefit and deliver results for the individuals they serve, our communities and taxpayers as a whole.

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. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can assist or serve as a resource to you and your staff in the weeks and months ahead.

Sincerely,



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



Ellie Hollander  
President and CEO  
Meals on Wheels America

Contact Information:  
1612 K Street NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20006  
202-682-6899  
[www.nanasp.org](http://www.nanasp.org)

Contact Information:  
1550 Crystal Drive, Suite 1004  
Arlington, VA 22202  
703-548-5558  
[www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org](http://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org)