

## 2022 ADVOCACY AGENDA

Meals on Wheels is a proven antidote to loneliness, hunger and malnutrition – offering the nutritious meals and personal connections millions of older adults urgently need to stay physically and emotionally healthy and independent. First authorized and funded under the Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Program 50 years ago, Meals on Wheels remains pivotal to solving the growing issues of senior hunger and isolation.

Meals on Wheels America advocates for legislation and policies that strengthen and support home-delivered and congregate nutrition programs in communities across the country, their committed staff and volunteers and the older adults they serve. Greater federal investments and consistent support for the Meals on Wheels network are critical to ensure that local senior nutrition programs have the resources necessary to fully address the nutritional and social needs of older adults today and in the years to come. This year, we are calling on Congress and the Administration to:

### 1. Double federal funding for OAA Nutrition Programs, like Meals on Wheels.

- **Increase funding for the OAA Nutrition Program in FY 2023 to a minimum total of \$1,933,506,000.** This funding for home-delivered and congregate meals and the Nutrition Services Incentive Programs (NSIP) is integral for local programs to sufficiently address the increased demand for services and higher operating costs they are currently facing, especially amid COVID-19.
- Protect and grow other federal funding sources for Meals on Wheels programs in FY 2023, such as the Social Services, Community Services and Community Development Block Grants, and Medicare and Medicaid home- and community-based services (HCBS).

### 2. Advance policies and innovations that support community-based nutrition programs as they strive to serve more older adults now and in the future.

- Continue a strong and coordinated implementation of the *Supporting Older Americans Act of 2020* – the law reauthorizing the OAA as the primary piece of legislation supporting nutrition and social services for individuals age 60 and older.
- Convene a White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, Hunger, and Health to discuss national hunger issues, such as senior food insecurity and malnutrition, and move forward solutions to effectively address them with the support of programs like Meals on Wheels.
- Develop policies and incentives to leverage and support the existing network of OAA nutrition programs in addressing the evolving healthcare needs of a rapidly growing older adult population.

### 3. Strengthen and expand the broader network of nutrition and social programs – especially within the charitable sector – that provides vital services and assistance to older adults and their families.

- Improve access and availability of other national anti-hunger programs that assist older adults in receiving necessary nutrition in their communities – including the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – so that more older adults can participate in and receive these essential federal benefits.
- Enhance charitable giving incentives and assistance for 501(c)(3) organizations under the tax code to protect and grow revenue, which is critical to the success and sustainability of nonprofits and public-private partnerships such as Meals on Wheels.