

- 1. Increase federal funding for the Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Program in FY 2022.** The OAA Nutrition Program includes Home-Delivered and Congregate meals and the Nutrition Services Incentive Programs (NSIP) that together exist to reduce hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; promote socialization; and delay the onset of adverse health conditions for seniors. Federal funding for OAA programs – which, for every dollar spent, is able to secure \$3 from other sources – has failed to keep pace with the demand for services that has escalated during the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, increased funding is necessary to meet the drastically increased need for nutrition services for older adults nationwide.
- 2. Implement 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 their caregivers for more than 50 years, with consideration for the evolving needs of senior nutrition programs due to pandemic response and recovery.** Our nation’s senior population is growing rapidly, leaving more seniors at risk of hunger and isolation. A strong and coordinated implementation of the OAA, as well as broad education and training of policy changes established by the new law, are essential to meeting the needs of vulnerable older adults and helping them to live independently in their homes and communities.
- 3. Strengthen other federal anti-hunger nutrition programs that provide essential services to older adults and their families.** With one in seven seniors facing the threat of hunger prior to the pandemic, programs that assist older adults in receiving necessary nutrition, such as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), should be expanded so that more older adults can participate and access these benefits to increase their financial food security.
- 4. Protect and grow programs and services that help older adults age independently in their communities, including the Social Services, Community Services and Community Development Block Grants, and Medicare and Medicaid home- and community-based services (HCBS).** These federal programs are critical to local Meals on Wheels providers and their ability to leverage multiple public and private funding sources, especially in response to and recovery from the COVID-19 health and economic crises, to address the unique nutritional, social, financial and health-related needs of an at-risk senior population.
- 5. Enhance charitable giving incentives and assistance for 501(c)(3) organizations under the tax code.** A true public-private partnership, Meals on Wheels programs rely on their charitable standing for both revenue from private donations as well as savings from their exempt status. Now more than ever, public and private funds are critical to help nonprofits serving as lifelines within their communities survive the economic challenges brought on by COVID-19. As federal funding provides only a portion of the full cost of vital nutrition and social supports, a tax code that protects nonprofit status, revenue through charitable giving incentives and the volunteer base is critical to the success and sustainability of the aging services network.

For additional information and ways to take action, visit www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/advocate.