



December 2, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell and Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of our organizations that collectively represent Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), local senior nutrition providers and other community-based organizations serving more than 10 million older adults each year through the Older Americans Act (OAA), we urge you and your colleagues to pass a fiscal year (FY) 2023 appropriations bill during the lame duck session that includes increased federal funding for this critical legislation. The OAA programs, such as home-delivered and congregate meals, in-home services, transportation, caregiver assistance, and other community-based supportive services, have been instrumental in supporting older adults for more than 50 years and essential in providing frontline services throughout the pandemic.

Increased investment this year is necessary to address existing needs, avoid service cuts and expand access to more at-risk older adults and their caregivers, particularly those living in poverty, older adults of color, and other populations with greatest social and economic need as outlined by Congress in the OAA statute. While many day-to-day societal routines have returned to pre-pandemic norms, that is often not the case for older adults and individuals receiving services through the OAA, as they remain at the highest risk for COVID-19 infection complications. For myriad reasons including the impact of inflation on older adults with fixed incomes, the sustained demand for service levels resulting from the pandemic, and the rapid growth in the older adult population, we implore lawmakers to increase funding in FY 2023. Ensure that any appropriations package incorporates the following allocations for OAA programs:

- \$797.1 million for Supportive Services (Title III-B)
- \$1.934 million for Congregate and Home-Delivered Nutrition Services (Title III C1-C2 and Nutrition Services Incentive Program)
- \$50 million for Evidence-Based Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (Title III-D)
- \$388 million for Caregiver Services (Title III-E)

Continuing resolutions (CR), whether short-term or long-term, impede strategic and cost-effective planning. They impact service delivery and ultimately fail to address the needs of your constituents at a time when services needed are at record levels. Any additional CRs at this time would represent a cut in funding because they would not account for the growth in demand that occurred during the pandemic, the demographics of an increasing older adult population nor the rising costs to deliver these life-sustaining services. While all sectors are feeling the impacts of inflation, it creates particularly damaging ripple effects on the Aging Network's ability to meet the needs of older adults. As examples:

- Caregiving workforce shortages and stagnant wages are putting many older adults at grave risk, as the in-home, very personal care they require to remain at home is in limited supply.
- OAA nutrition providers are grappling with rising food and fuel costs, which means fewer people can receive the nutrition needed to avoid hunger, malnutrition, or other dietary diseases.
- Fuel costs affect transportation providers as well, which means fewer available rides to medical providers, congregate meal sites and other community resources that older adults rely upon.

The Aging Network has the solutions and knows how to best serve older adults in our communities—we just need the funding to support these proven practices.

For decades, Congress has supported the OAA in a bipartisan and bicameral manner, including through greatly needed and appreciated emergency funding during the COVID-19 pandemic. We urge you to build on the prior successes of community aging services and supports programs to ensure that a FY 2023 appropriations bill includes significant funding increases that will allow OAA providers to serve the millions of older adults who depend on them. As always, we and our members stand ready to assist you however we can, so please reach out if we can provide additional information or resources.

Sincerely,



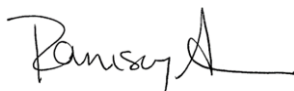
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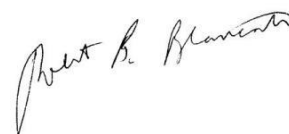
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Cc: House and Senate Appropriations Committee Chairs and Ranking Members
House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and
Education Chairs and Ranking Members