

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 21, 2026

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Capito and Ranking Member Baldwin:

As you consider the Subcommittee's funding priorities for Fiscal Year 2027, we strongly urge you to increase funding for programs authorized under the Older Americans Act (OAA). With the historic aging of our nation's population and the surge in demand for services over the last several years, not to mention the unprecedented attacks on health and social services under the current administration, increased funding for OAA programs is more important now than ever. To ensure older adults can remain healthy and in their homes, we request \$4.7 billion in funding for the OAA in Fiscal Year 2027.

As you know, the OAA is the major federal vehicle for the delivery of social and nutrition services for more than 11 million older Americans. These programs include congregate nutrition services, home-delivered nutrition services (i.e., "Meals on Wheels"), supportive and transportation services, activities to promote socialization and wellness at senior centers, employment and community service through the Senior Community Service Employment Program, vulnerable elder rights protection, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, and family caregiver support.

The demand for these programs has grown significantly over the past year and remains great. In fact, in many areas of the country, vulnerable seniors are on waiting lists for services that they desperately need. Meanwhile, the cost of living – particularly for food, medication, and housing – continues to increase for seniors. Moreover, the demand is only expected to increase. Today, there are over 83 million Americans aged 60 years and older in the United States, the largest cohort of seniors in American history. The U.S. Census projects that these trends will continue and by 2035 the number of Americans aged 60 years and older is expected to rise to nearly 95 million.

We are very concerned by this administration's proposal to eliminate the Administration for Community Living. This would be shortsighted and counter to the goal of making our country healthier. In addition to improving health and independence, investments in OAA services save taxpayer dollars by reducing premature and costly Medicare and Medicaid expenditures resulting from unnecessary nursing home placement or hospitalizations due to poor nutrition and chronic health conditions. For example, falls among older adults cost our health care system \$80 billion

each year. Falls prevention programs funded by the OAA are proven to reduce falls. Moreover, we can feed an older adult for an entire year through Meals on Wheels for approximately the same cost as just one day in the hospital or 10 days in a nursing home.

There are few better investments than the OAA programs that millions of older adults rely on for a healthy and dignified life. Despite the cost-effectiveness and significant return on investment of these critical programs, federal funding for the OAA has failed to keep pace with inflation and the growing need. Total OAA funding of \$4.7 billion would not only recognize the growth in demand for services, but also the increased cost of services over the past several years.

We realize you face very difficult fiscal constraints. However, we ask that you consider the value and need for OAA services, and fund these programs at the highest possible levels.

We greatly appreciate your consideration, and we look forward to working with you to ensure a sustained investment in OAA services and programs.


Sincerely,



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



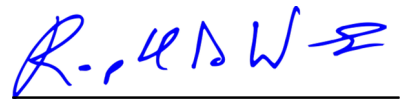
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



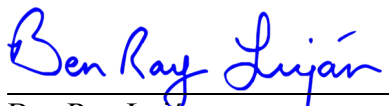
Tim Kaine
United States Senator



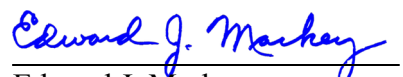
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



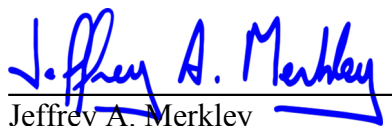
Raphael Warnock
United States Senator





Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator

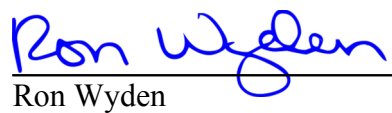


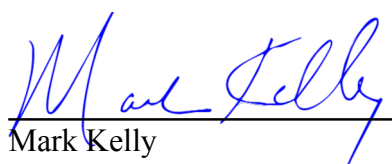
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

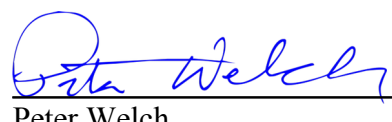

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

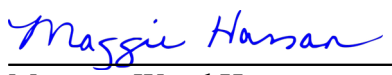

Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

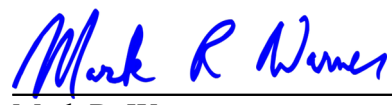

Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator

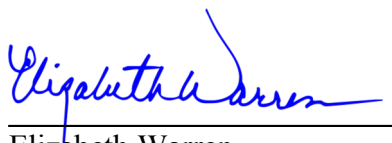

Ron Wyden
United States Senator

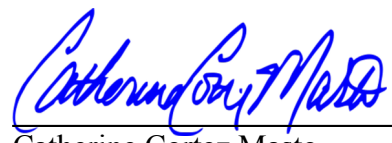

Mark Kelly
United States Senator

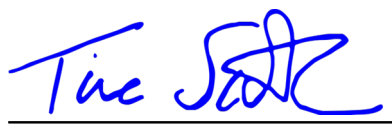

Peter Welch
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator

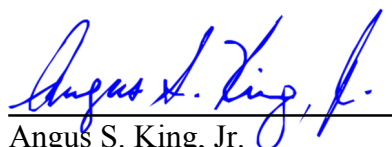

Mark R. Warner
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Elizabeth Warren
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Catherine Cortez Masto
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Tina Smith
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Chris Van Hollen
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Michael F. Bennet
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Sheldon Whitehouse
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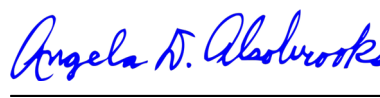
Jon Ossoff
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
United States Senator



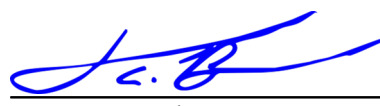
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United States Senator



Angela D. Alsobrooks
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



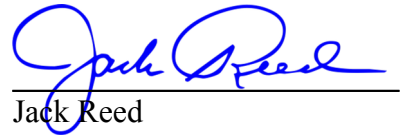
Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



Elissa Slotkin
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator