



Leaders in Aging Well at Home

December 16, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer, Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Ron Wyden, Chairman, Senate Finance Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senate Majority Leader Schumer and Chairman Wyden:

I am writing to thank you both for your leadership and commitment to support our nation's older adults through essential elder justice provisions in the Build Back Better Act (BBB) draft bill released by the Finance Committee. I am writing to you today to also urge you to restore a vital section that was included in the Senate stand-alone elder justice bill (S.2674, the Elder Justice Reauthorization and Modernization Act) and the House-passed BBB bill. **USAgings** (formerly the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging), which represents and supports the national network of Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and advocates for the Title VI Native American Aging Programs, **urges you to prioritize \$250 million in grant funding for local programs to address social isolation and loneliness.**

A modest amount that would drive immeasurable lifesaving and cost-saving benefits, this allocation would support AAAs and other community-based organizations in addressing continued social isolation and the prevention of future harms to older Americans.

The emphasis on mental health and resiliency throughout the BBB has never been more pressing and specific investments in programs to address the social isolation and loneliness of older adults should be a top priority. I urge you to restore the social isolation funding from the Elder Justice Reauthorization and Modernization Act as introduced within the House-passed version of BBB to the Senate's final version of the BBB. Thank you for your leadership and ongoing commitment to older Americans and their caregivers as you advance—and pass—the BBB.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me or USAgings's policy staff at 202.872.0888, policy@usaging.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandy Markwood". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sandy Markwood
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Members of the Senate Finance Committee