



## **Ensure OAA, MIPPA and Aging Programs Are Funded! Reach Out to Congress Today!**

Over the weekend, Congress announced a topline spending agreement for all FY 2024 appropriations bills after nailing down the final amounts for defense and non-defense discretionary (NDD) spending. The deal will allow for the total level of spending laid out in last year's bipartisan debt limit agreement, with \$886.3 billion for defense and \$772.7 billion for nondefense programs.

### **FY 2024 NDD Funding**

The NDD figure is good news, as House Republicans had been pushing to lower this number, despite it being agreed upon last May by President Biden and then-Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA). However, we still have our work cut out for us to ensure Congress avoids a shutdown and then ultimately recommends the highest possible funding levels for Older Americans Act and other key aging programs.

While conversations are ongoing, the expiration of the two continuing resolutions (CR) are looming on January 19 and February 2. Though the topline number agreement is progress, there is still potential for a partial or full government shutdown given the short time frames.

### **MIPPA Medicare Low-Income Outreach and Enrollment**

As covered in USAging's November 21 *Advocacy Alert*, the authorization and funding for MIPPA was dropped from the last round of CRs at the last minute; the program was hitching a ride with other health bills onto the CR. **This major oversight currently leaves MIPPA unauthorized and unfunded.** The former may make it complicated for ACL to administer the program in the next few months and the latter will eventually create obvious problems for the SHIPs, AAAs and ADRCs that rely on this funding to

conduct targeted outreach to those Medicare beneficiaries most in need of Medicare's cost-savings programs such as the Medicare Savings Programs and LIS/ExtraHelp.

USAging, NCOA and other national advocacy groups have been reaching out to the Hill since November but discovered that Congress is not hearing from enough advocates in the field about this serious problem. USAging joined 73 other groups on a recent letter to the Hill, but it is important Members of Congress hear from their constituents, such as AAAs!

## **Take Action Today**

**Call or email your U.S. Senators and all Representatives whose constituents you serve in your planning and service area.** Express support for OAA appropriations and concern about the state of the MIPPA low-income outreach program—and share the value these critical aging programs bring to the older adults and other Medicare beneficiaries you serve.

- **Customize our template email (below) to include your local data and perspective.**
- Find your Members' contact information on their websites: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov).

## **Sample Language**

Be sure to customize carefully!

Dear [Senator/Representative LAST NAME]:

On behalf of [YOUR AGENCY/PROGRAM NAME] in [AGENCY/PROGRAM LOCATION/STATE], we are writing to urge you to finalize FY 2024 appropriations levels and adopt the highest possible funding levels for all Older Americans Act (OAA) programs and services. We request that Congress especially prioritize the following OAA services when finalizing the FY 2024 budget for the U.S. Administration on Aging, housed within the U.S. Administration for Community Living, HHS:

- **OAA Title III B Home and Community-Based Supportive Services**

- **OAA Title VI Grants for Native American Aging Programs**, Part A (nutrition and supportive services) and Part C (family caregiver support)
- **OAA Title III E National Family Caregiver Support Program**

We also wanted to alert you to an unfortunate oversight of an important program our agency relies upon to conduct targeted outreach to low-income Medicare beneficiaries who are not yet enrolled in Medicare programs designed to save them money.

The **Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act's (MIPPA) low-income outreach and assistance program** provides essential funding to [AGENCY NAME] and other Area Agencies on Aging, State Health Insurance Programs (SHIPs) and Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) around the country. The program, administered at the federal level by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, was not included in the recent continuing resolution for FY 2024 funding, even though other "health extenders" were.

[INSERT ANY KEY DATA OR OTHER POINTS ABOUT YOUR PROGRAMS AND THOSE YOU HAVE HELPED.]

Our hope is that you can take action, or speak with your colleagues on the respective committees, to ensure that MIPPA is updated and funded in the next spending bill.

Please feel free to reach out anytime to [INSERT CONTACT INFORMATION], on this or any aging issues of importance to you and your constituents.

Sincerely,

[NAME, affiliation, address, etc.]

Stay tuned for more updates from USAging and thank you for your advocacy on this important issue!

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**If you have questions or concerns about this *Advocacy Alert*** or USAging's policy positions, please contact the USAging Policy Team, Amy Gotwals, Olivia Umoren and Seth Ickes at [policy@usaging.org](mailto:policy@usaging.org).