



Advocacy Needed on FY 2022 Appropriations

Take Action Today to Protect OAA Increases!

January 24, 2022

Much of the progress we were hoping for in early 2021 remains in limbo as Democrats' agenda stalls in the face of Republican opposition. USAging is particularly concerned with the finalization (or not) of the FY 2022 spending bills. Depending on the outcome next month, we could lose the best opportunity we've had in years to reset annual spending levels for Older Americans Act (OAA) programs and services.

We recognize the COVID-19 relief funding directed to the Aging Network has or will continue to provide much-needed relief for USAging members and others in the Aging Network who are working tirelessly to meet local consumer needs. But without new, elevated thresholds for *annual* OAA funding, Area Agencies on Aging, Title VI Native American Aging programs and their partners won't be able to continue to meet the current needs of older adults and caregivers—nor will they be able to keep up with expected increases in levels of need as the population ages. **This is why it is so important that we reset this foundational, stable federal funding source at levels that reflect reality and increase the Aging Network's capacity for the future.**

We need your strongest advocacy push yet to ensure that Congress strikes a good deal on FY 2022 levels for aging programs.

As you are aware, most federal government programs are currently operating under a temporary funding measure, called a continuing resolution (CR), that keeps programs stuck at FY 2021 levels. The current CR will expire on February 18 but it is unclear if appropriations leaders will have reached a deal by then. The possibility of a full-year CR at FY 2021 levels is a real threat for the communities you serve if Senate and House appropriators fail to identify a compromise. That is why, as House and Senate appropriators negotiate spending levels over the next few weeks, we need your advocacy to secure *new* thresholds for OAA spending and not rely on the outdated and insufficient funding levels of a pre-COVID era.

We urge you to reach out NOW to advocate FOR an FY 2022 funding bill that includes the House-approved levels for OAA and other aging programs and AGAINST any additional CRs or, worse, a full-year CR.

Take Action Today

It doesn't matter if you have already connected with your Members of Congress and asked your grassroots networks to engage on OAA appropriations levels, it is imperative that all Senators and Representatives continue to hear from their OAA champions at this point in the process.

Advocacy with Members on the [House](#) and [Senate](#) Appropriations Committees is especially important. If your Representative or Senator serves on one of these key committees, your letter should request that they share your messages with their committee leaders. At this point, many funding decisions are being made at a leadership level, and the more they hear from their committee colleagues, the more seriously they will consider these requests.

STEP 1: Visit [USAging's FY 2022 OAA Appropriations Advocacy Toolkit](#) to assist your efforts. Our resources include everything you need to take action:

- Template letters for you to send and share ([AAA](#) and [Title VI](#) versions)
- [Current appropriations chart](#)
- [Additional resources as background](#)

STEP 2: Put your agency on record. Send a letter using our templates but customize to your agency/community. Send the letter via email to their DC and district offices. Find that contact information on your Members' websites: www.house.gov and www.senate.gov.

STEP 3: Make Your Support for OAA Funding Public. Email or post a short note to lawmakers on social media. Members monitor their email/website traffic for constituent correspondence, and personal messages resonate most.

STEP 4: Engage Your Provider Network. Enlist fellow advocates! Urge your providers, advisory board members and other important stakeholders to send their own letters to Congress or post to social media. Please do all you can to amplify the message and engage others who understand the value of OAA in their community! You're welcome to forward this *Advocacy Alert* to your networks or edit it to be best received by your advocates.

We need all AAAs, Title VI Native American Aging Programs and local allies to raise their voices in support of Older Americans Act funding and make the local case against more CRs. **We must ensure that all Members of Congress know how important increased, stable, federal funding for OAA is to promote the health, well-being and independence of their older constituents and those who care for them.**

If you have questions or concerns about this *Advocacy Alert* or USAging's policy positions, please contact Amy Gotwals at agotwals@usaging.org and Monica Billger at mbillger@usaging.org.