



USAging Leaders in
Aging Well
at Home

Advocacy Alert

New USAging Tool to Engage Members of Congress on Key Aging Issues

March 14, 2023

With the release of the President's budget, a new Republican-led House of Representatives and renewed Senate interest in addressing the gaps in the health and long-term services and supports workforces, USAging members and allies have many advocacy opportunities to seize upon in the coming months! To help you engage your congressional delegations on the most pressing issues for older Americans, we've released a new policy brief, [*What Policymakers Need to Know about Aging Policy*](#).

As Members of Congress—both new and returning—settle into their roles in the 118th Congress, **now is a great time to educate your federal elected officials** about the critical role that your agency, along with AAAs and Title VI Native American Aging Programs around the country, play in enabling older adults and caregivers to age well at home and in the community. And now, you can add USAging's new policy brief to your toolbox! We've designed the brief to give a high-level introduction to the aging issues USAging members care most about; our more detailed *Policy Priorities* will be released at next month's Aging Policy Briefing & Capitol Hill Day.

Take Action

The time is now to uplift the most pressing needs of your community! In addition to USAging's ongoing outreach to Congress, it is critical that AAAs and Title VI programs contact their Members of Congress to reinforce the most critical needs of older adults, such as FY 2024 funding for Older Americans Act, investing in the HCBS workforce and much more. **Make engaging your Members of Congress a priority by regularly educating them about your agency and the work it is doing to support the older adults and caregivers who are their constituents.**

We've provided sample language below for your emails, but make sure to include information about your agency and the people you serve in their districts and states along with a link to USAging's policy brief as a policy conversation starter.

Action Steps

- **STEP 1: Email Your Members of Congress!** All AAAs and Title VI programs should send an email to your service area's delegation in the 118th Congress. Use USAging's sample language below to help guide your outreach. Be sure to customize messages with information about your own agency and the consumers you serve.
- **STEP 2: Request a Meeting or Visit.** Invite Members of Congress to see your programs in action or ask for a meeting. And, if you are coming to DC next month for the [Aging Policy Briefing & Capitol Hill Day](#), try to schedule an in-person meeting for when you are in town.

- **Sample Email**

Dear [Senator LASTNAME/Representative LASTNAME]:

On behalf of [YOUR AGENCY NAME] in [AGENCY LOCATION/STATE], I am writing to request a meeting to share information on the needs of the older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers we serve and how their realities can better inform the aging and health care policy you and your colleagues craft in 2023.

[INSERT HERE YOUR MISSION AND A DESCRIPTION OF WHAT YOUR AGENCY DOES, IDEALLY WITH LOCAL EXAMPLES AND DATA.]

I am also sharing [What Policymakers Need to Know About Aging Policy](#), a new resource from our national association, USAging, which raises many of the most important national issues that our local agency sees the impact of every day.

[Ask Option #1: If you haven't previously held meetings with this offer] Can we set up a time for [AGENCY NAME] to meet with you and your staff via Zoom or in person when you are next back from DC?

[Ask Option #2: If you want to go straight to a site visit] I'd like to invite you to visit our agency so that you can see our programs in action and how our services support the independence, well-being and health of older adults in [STATE]. I am happy to provide more details and work closely with your staff to make this possible.

[Ask Option #3: If you plan to attend the Aging Policy Briefing & Capitol Hill Day next month] I will be in DC April 25-26 and

would love to schedule a time to meet in person to discuss the importance of the Older Americans Act, Medicaid home and community-based services and other federal programs to our clients. Please let me know how I might get on your or your staff members' schedule for Wednesday, April 26, ideally in the afternoon. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,
[YOUR NAME, AFFILIATION AND CONTACT INFO]

- **STEP 3: Plan Ahead and Be Prepared!** USAging will soon begin its FY 2024 appropriations campaign and will release our 2023 *Policy Priorities* in late April. That's why now is a great time to introduce your Members of Congress to your agency and its work. This is also a great time to establish or re-establish relationships and lines of communication with your Members of Congress so that you can make larger asks of them in the next few months!

Even if you don't get a meeting now, you may at least learn who is handling aging or health issues for the Member of Congress, get a promise of a future meeting or otherwise put your agency and your clients' needs on their radar!

Thank you for your advocacy!

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