



Leaders in Aging Well at Home

October 20, 2021

The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Chairman  
The Honorable Richard Shelby, Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Patty Murray, Chair  
The Honorable Roy Blunt, Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor/HHS/Education

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chairwoman  
The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chair  
The Honorable Tom Cole, Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor/HHS/Education

Dear Chairman Leahy, Ranking Member Shelby, Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Granger, Chairwoman Murray, Ranking Member Blunt and Ranking Member Cole:

As you finalize FY 2022 appropriations for Labor/HHS/Education and Related Agencies, USAgging (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 the House-passed funding increases for **Older Americans Act** (OAA) and other aging programs that help older Americans live with optimal health, well-being, independence and dignity in their homes and communities.

OAA is the cornerstone of the nation's non-Medicaid home and community-based services (HCBS) system, assisting older adults including people with early onset dementia and grandparents raising grandchildren, as well as caregivers of older adults. As America reels from an unrelenting pandemic, the demand for HCBS continues to grow in every community in tandem with the growth of an aging demographic, well in-place before COVID-19 exposed the elevated need for such services.

Unfortunately, OAA funding has not kept pace with inflation or the growing population eligible for these essential services which is why we appreciate and strongly support the important steps that Congress has made in the House-passed FY 2022 funding proposal (H.R. 4502) toward reversing decades of underinvestment in OAA programs and services.

Specifically, as you continue the process of finalizing FY 2022 appropriations, we *urge you to, at minimum, adopt the House-passed increases for OAA and ask your support for the following USAgging priorities:*

- **Increase OAA Title III B Supportive Services to \$785 million (or, at minimum, maintain the House-passed increase funding level of \$550.6 million).** Title III B is the most flexible source of OAA funding and USAging's Area Agency on Aging members rely on it to provide a wide range of services to older adults, including in-home care, case management, information and referral, transportation, legal services and much more.
- **Match the House-proposed levels of \$249.9 million for the OAA Title III E National Family Caregiver Support Program,** reflecting the President's budget and the huge need among family caregivers of older adults for support and training.
- **Invest at least \$86 million for OAA Title VI Native American Nutrition, Supportive and Caregiver Services,** doubling Part A to \$70 million and increasing Part C to \$15.8 million, as the House recommended.
- **Incorporate a \$1 million investment in [engAGED: The National Resource Center for Engaging Older Adults](#),** which is funded by the U.S. Administration on Aging under authority in the Older Americans Act. The Center leverages the existing Aging Network infrastructure to combat social isolation among older adults, a critically important issue affecting the health and well-being of millions of older adults today.

For more information on how these Older Americans Act programs and services support older adults and caregivers, please see our [March 25 letter](#), which provides additional information on the local needs behind our requests.

We thank you for the critical supplementary funding provided by Congress throughout the pandemic, which served to support the Aging Network as they accommodated the rapidly increased demand and developed innovative alterations to programs and service delivery. We now urge lawmakers to incorporate long-overdue annual appropriations increases for sustainable cost-effective, common-sense investments in Older Americans Act and other critical aging programs.

Again, more information and background about USAging's priorities and requests for OAA and other aging program funding in FY 2022 is available in our [March 25](#) (comprehensive), [April 26](#) (Title VI request) and [June 29](#) (President's Budget and Funding Flexibility) letters or visit [USAging's 2021 Policy Priorities](#).

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me or USAging's policy staff at 202.872.0888.

Sincerely,



Sandy Markwood  
Chief Executive Officer

cc:

Members of the House and Senate Labor/HHS/Education Subcommittee