

Support Funding for Older Americans Act Nutrition Programs

Support Older Americans Act Nutrition Programs in FY17 Labor-HHS Appropriations

****This is a Programmatic Request****

DEADLINE TO SIGN ON: March 21, 2016

Supported by the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a), Meals on Wheels, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the Jewish Federations of North America, and the Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies.

Dear Colleague:

Over the last half century, Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Programs have grown from federally administered grants to a nationwide network of State Agencies on Aging, Area Agencies on Aging, Tribal and Native Hawaiian organizations, and thousands of charitable organizations that provide more than 2.5 million healthy meals to seniors with the greatest social need.

In recognition of the millions of American seniors empowered to live with dignity and independence, we ask that you join a letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies requesting that the Administration for Community Living's Congregate and Home-Delivered Nutrition Services be funded at no less than the President's request in Fiscal Year 2017.

In recent years, funding for OAA Nutrition Programs has not kept pace with inflation or population growth. With 41 million Americans over the age of 65 and 10,000 Baby Boomers turning 65 each day, continued underfunding will only exacerbate the strain on America's seniors and working families.

These nutritious meals, served in social or home-based settings, provide many recipients' primary source of food each day and much-needed face-to-face interaction. Particularly for those who are low-income, living alone, or mobility-restricted, OAA-funded meals allow seniors to remain in their homes, where they would prefer to be, gain a greater quality of life, require fewer hospital stays, and live longer, more dignified lives.

Please join us in renewing our nation's promise to our seniors by supporting Older Americans Act Nutrition Programs for FY17.

To sign onto the letter, please contact Aimee Collins-Mandeville in Rep. Murphy's office at aimee.collins-mandeville@mail.house.gov. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Patrick E. Murphy
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Suzanne Bonamici
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Theodore E. Deutch
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Dave Loebsack
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Letter text:

Thank you for your ongoing support for programs that help older Americans live active and independent lives. We respectfully request that under your leadership the Subcommittee continue to fulfill the promise of the Older Americans Act by providing adequate funding for the Administration for Community Living's Congregate and Home-delivered nutrition services for fiscal year 2017.

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) directs programs that provide millions of American seniors, most of whom are low-income, the resources necessary to reduce hunger and isolation and maintain their dignity, health, and independence. The services these seniors receive allow them to remain independent and live in their own homes, where they prefer to be, while saving taxpayer dollars through reduced need for hospital and institutional care.

In 2013, 2.4 million seniors received 86 million nutritious meals at senior centers and charitable community organizations, with public-private partnerships like Meals on Wheels delivering 137 million meals to mobility-restricted seniors. For the majority of these seniors, home-delivered meals provide more than one-half their food for the entire day. Importantly, these programs provide more than just food. The delivery of meals is often the only opportunity for face-to-face contact or conversation for homebound seniors. Additionally, two-thirds of congregate meal participants report that their health has improved because they attend lunch programs.

It is for these reasons we respectfully request the subcommittee mark include the President's request for \$454 million for ACL Congregate nutrition services and \$234 million for Home-delivered nutrition services. These vital programs authorized under the Older Americans Act help fulfill our nation's commitment to maintaining dignity and independent living regardless of income or location. We thank you for your consideration.