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January 22, 2015

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor and Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Burr
Chairman
Subcommittee on Primary Health and
Aging
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor and Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bernard Sanders
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Primary Health and
Aging
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Alexander, Murray, Burr and Sanders:

The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) and the Association of Jewish Family & Children's Agencies (AJFCA) are pleased to endorse the Older Americans Act (OAA) reauthorization bill, S. 192. We urge Senators to support this legislation and reauthorize the Older Americans Act as soon as possible.

JFNA represents 153 Jewish Federations and over 300 independent Jewish communities. The Jewish Federations, collectively among the top 10 largest charities on the continent, protects and enhances the well-being of Jews worldwide through the values of tikkun olam (repairing the world), tzedakah (charity and social justice) and Torah (Jewish learning). AJFCA is the membership association for approximately 125 Jewish Family Service agencies across the United States and Canada. Ranging in size from small departments of local Jewish Federations to some of the largest human services agencies in North America, our members provide vital services to clients of all ages, faiths and economic backgrounds. While we serve many vulnerable populations, older adults make up a large portion of our clients and aging services are a priority among agencies.

More than 20% of American Jews are over the age of 65. As such, our service providers value the programs supported by the OAA. OAA funds pay for home and community-based services through Jewish Family Service agencies, Jewish Vocational Service agencies and Jewish Community Centers. Jewish organizations provide services such as adult day care, case management, congregate and home-delivered meals, elder abuse prevention and intervention, family caregiver support, home care, legal conservatorship, transportation behavioral health services. We support the development and execution of innovative demonstration projects that advance and sustain healthy, efficient, and independent

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community-based aging, and we support the Senior Community Service Employment Program, among other important initiatives supported by the Older Americans Act.

Our network is comprised of experts in aging services for all seniors and we make up the primary social service providers for Holocaust survivors in the United States. As people who work with Holocaust survivors in their homes and in the community, we are reminded each day of the importance of enabling Holocaust survivors to remain safely at home with their communities. The negative effects of isolation can be devastating for survivors who also face financial challenges and fewer family members to help care for them. The ability to help provide that comfort and quality of life can be obtained in part through services offered through the Older Americans Act. We are pleased that the OAA reauthorization bill directs the Assistant Secretary for Aging to issue guidance to states on serving and conducting outreach to the Holocaust survivor population.

JFNA and AJFCA look forward to working with members of the Senate and House of Representatives to reauthorize the Older Americans Act. If you have any questions, please contact Shelley Rood at shelley.rood@jewishfederations.org or (202) 736-5880.

Sincerely,

William C. Daroff
Vice President for Public Policy &
Director of the Washington Office
The Jewish Federations of North America

Lee I. Sherman
President & CEO
Association of Jewish Family &
Children's Agencies

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