



*Advocacy. Action. Answers on Aging.*

## **n4a's Visioning Guide for the 2011 Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act**

February 12, 2010

Dear Area Agency on Aging and Title VI Native American Aging Program Directors:

The U.S. Administration on Aging's (AoA) upcoming listening sessions and online feedback tool will provide the Aging Network with a valuable opportunity to share our vision for the future of aging services and supports, as AoA develops the Administration's positions on the 2011 reauthorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA) this spring. (For more information, visit AoA's [website](#).)

**n4a's own process to develop recommendations** has just begun, and will continue through the summer. As a first step in that development process, the n4a Board of Directors held a strategic planning session to generate broad themes and issues for OAA reauthorization. n4a will build on these first ideas by holding Dinner Caucuses at the AoA Listening Sessions; polling AAAs and Title VI aging programs via an online survey to be released by the end of February; and conducting OAA reauthorization sessions at our April 19-20 Aging Policy Briefing and Capitol Hill Day in Washington, D.C., and the July 18-21 Annual Conference in St. Louis, MO. In the fall, n4a will publish our official OAA reauthorization recommendations and begin to work with advocates and congressional champions to build momentum for 2011.

Based largely on the n4a Board strategic planning session, the following is a preliminary list of ideas, recommendations and topic areas for your consideration as you and your agency/program leaders begin to think about what changes are needed in the OAA to better enable older adults and their caregivers to get the supports and services they need. We hope you will share your own thoughts with n4a (online survey coming soon!) as well as with AoA.

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## 2011 OAA Reauthorization Should Address/Explore:

1. **Project 2020** (S. 1257/H.R. 2852). Developed jointly by n4a and the National Association of State Units on Aging, *Project 2020* would take three tested and proven programs from the Aging Network to scale nationally: single entry point models, evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention activities, and enhanced nursing home diversion programs. (For more info, visit n4a's [website](#).)
2. **Local Flexibility**. Increasing local flexibility in funding in order to provide more customized care for the consumers that AAAs and Title VI aging programs serve (one example might be enhancing the flexibility in home-delivered and congregate meal programs, another might be exploring cost-sharing programs).
3. **Strengthen Critical Services**. Strengthen the role of the Act in the delivery of the following critical services: information and assistance; healthy aging/wellness/disease prevention; and home and community-based services and supports.
4. **Enhanced Coordination of LTSS**. Strengthen efforts to integrate medical and human services-based long-term services and supports (LTSS), particularly in order to promote the Aging Network's role in health, wellness (both physical and behavioral health) and care management. For example, make the connection between single point of entry systems and coordinated health care initiatives, such as ADRCs and the medical home model or others.
5. **Build Capacity of the Aging Network**. Expand the funding base and focus of the Act to continue to enhance the capacity of the Aging Network, with additional focus on workforce development, utilization of technology and application of business models.
6. **Broaden Planning Role**. Broaden, strengthen and support the unique role of AAAs and Title VI aging programs in strategic community planning to promote the ability of older adults to live successfully and independently at home and in the community for as long as possible. Through expanded partnership opportunities, promote livable communities for all ages and the integration, coordination and delivery of long-term services and supports.
7. **Address Changes in the Aging Population**. Ensure that the Act addresses the assets and needs of a changing, aging population, including but not limited to young elders, 85+, minority elders and caregivers.
8. **Enhance Mobility Options**. Expand the Aging Network's role in the coordination of transportation and human service programs and the provision of mobility management services in order to promote the ability of older adults to live successfully and independently at home and in the community for as long as possible through expanded partnerships to promote livable communities for all ages.

**9. Make the Housing Connection.** Expand the Aging Network's role in access to housing that meets the needs of older adults and the coordination of long-term services and supports in housing, in order to maximize older adults' quality of life and to promote livable communities for all ages.

**10. Partnerships.** Expand the Aging Network's partnership opportunities to better collaborate at the federal, state and local levels with other critical entities/networks, such as CMS, CDC and the Veterans Administration.

**11. Person-Centered Access to Information.** Reinforce and support the Aging Network's role in person-centered access to information and assistance and public education so that older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers have ready access to information on long-term care planning; are connected to community-based long-term services and supports; and have access to options and benefits counseling and case management.

**12. Older Adults in the Workforce.** Strengthen existing workforce programs to meet the current and future employment needs of older adults. This is particularly important in light of recent economic forces, the aging of the population and the ever-growing need for many people to work beyond traditional retirement age.