



Advocacy. Action. Answers on Aging.

Statement on the 2011 Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act

September 10, 2010

The Honorable Herb Kohl, Chair
U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging
G31 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Al Franken, Member
U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging
320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Kohl and Senator Franken:

The two field hearings held this week by the Senate Special Committee on Aging in Milwaukee, WI and Maple Grove, MN, represent the beginning of an exciting conversation about the future of the Older Americans Act (OAA) as Congress looks to reauthorize this important piece of legislation in the coming year. We thank you for your leadership in conducting the hearings as a way to galvanize your colleagues in the Senate and to listen to older adults, caregivers and advocates, in order to start the reauthorization process in a thoughtful and thorough way.

As you know, n4a is proud to represent the nation's 629 Area Agencies on Aging and to be a champion in Washington, DC for the 246 Title VI Native American Aging Programs. We believe that the OAA is the critical cornerstone of aging services in this nation and that the 2011 reauthorization provides us with an opportunity to build on the successes of the Act in order to respond to the needs of today's and tomorrow's older adults and caregivers.

n4a's process to develop our reauthorization recommendations began last winter and has included three focus groups on the eve of AoA's Listening Sessions early this year; a comprehensive survey of our members on the Act this summer; and a "Ramping Up for Reauthorization" interactive discussion forum at our annual conference this July. We are in the process of finalizing our recommendations to Congress and hope to have specific details to share with you later this fall. n4a is committed to working with our AAA and Title VI members and congressional champions—like you—to build momentum for reauthorization in 2011.

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

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While we do not yet have those final recommendations to bring before the Special Committee on Aging, we have attached the draft set of ideas distributed at our annual conference in July in order to provide a sense of our priorities.

n4a's Board, members and staff look forward to working with you and your staff as the reauthorization process unfolds. Thank you for your leadership on behalf of our country's older adults, people with disabilities and their caregivers.

Sincerely,

Dawn Simonson
President, n4a
Executive Director, Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging, Inc., North Saint Paul, MN

Sandy Markwood
Chief Executive Officer, n4a

cc: Members of the Senate Special Committee on Aging

Attachments:
n4a Draft Ideas Document, July 2010