Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As the Subcommittee develops its FY2017 appropriations bill, we respectfully urge you to prioritize the prevention of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation by including $25 million for the Department of Health and Human Service’s budget for Elder Justice and Adult Protective Services.

According to the Elder Justice Coalition, there are more than six million victims of elder abuse, roughly one of every ten persons over 60. Additionally, the 2011 New York State Elder Abuse Prevalence Study found that for every elder abuse case known to agencies, twenty-four were unknown. According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, victims of elder financial abuse lose an estimated $2.9 billion a year, which can include entire life savings.

One in every seven Americans is over the age of 65, and by 2060 there will be more than 98 million seniors—more than double the senior population in 2013. With this unprecedented growth, it is critical that we have strong protections for our seniors. In past years, the Administration requested robust funding of $25 million for the Elder Justice Initiative, including Adult Protective Service, and we were deeply disappointed in the Administration’s FY17 request of $10 million. An appropriation of $25 million for the Elder Justice and Adult Protective Services at the Department of Health and Human Services would provide:

- Funding for Adult Protective Services, including an APS National Data System and Technical Assistance and national demonstration grants to both enhance APS data systems and development of program standards as well as an APS evaluation.
- Funding for research including elder abuse screening and to establish a better knowledge base about elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.

According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, the direct medical costs associated with elder abuse now exceed $5 billion annually. Victims often end up having to turn to other federal programs, especially Medicare and Medicaid, and financial abuse victims may require other assistance including income support. Many of these costs can be avoided if we make this investment today, not to mention a heavy emotional toll on seniors and their families.
Providing $25 million for the Elder Justice and Adult Prevention Services is a step in the right direction to protecting seniors from unscrupulous individuals, but there is more that can be done to fulfill the commitment we made in the passage of the Elder Justice Act. We look forward to continuing to work with the Committee on this important issues and thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

PETER T. KING
Member of Congress

SUZANNE BONAMICI
Member of Congress

MATT CARTWRIGHT
Member of Congress

PETER DEFAZIO
Member of Congress

RAÚL M. GRIJALVA
Member of Congress

ROBERT C. “BOBBY” SCOTT
Member of Congress