

February 2, 2021 Advocacy Alert



Advocacy Needed NOW to Secure Additional Older Americans Act Funding

Congress is Moving Quickly on Next Round of COVID-19 Relief Legislation

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Despite House passage of two versions of the HEROES Act, one \$3 trillion measure this summer and a \$2.2 trillion bill Congress appears poised to move another round of COVID-19 relief legislation in the next month or so. What remains uncertain, however, are specific details about the scale and scope of the measure; the process through which policy would move; and whether the first major piece of legislation to cross the new Biden Administration's desk will be bipartisan or only draw Democratic support.

Also unclear at this point is whether—despite bipartisan [Senate](#) and [House](#) support and calls from [n4a](#) and other [national advocates](#)—another pandemic emergency response bill will include additional funding to support older Americans and caregivers through the Older Americans Act (OAA). **We will be frank: we are facing an uphill battle to ensure OAA funding is included in the next relief package.**

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and the Senate's new Democratic majority are setting up a fast-track budget process this week that will lay the legislative foundation for what is expected to be a nearly \$2 trillion emergency response measure that largely mirrors the proposal that President Biden sent to Congress and national plan for COVID-19 response. *Unfortunately, the Administration's plan makes little mention of supporting high-risk older adults and caregivers at home during the extended health and economic crisis.*

n4a is doing all that we can to elevate these vital issues and needs to [Congress](#) and [the new Administration](#)—and we need your help! **Outreach from advocates in the Aging Network and grassroots supporters is essential to ensure that all corners of Congress and the Biden Administration understand the continuing and growing needs of older adults during the**

pandemic!

Please contact your Members of Congress to help make sure they understand what failing to invest in OAA and other vital aging programs could mean to older adults and caregivers in their communities.

Action is easy if you use our tools! Use the below tools to reach out to your Representatives and Senators again to tell them why it is imperative that Congress **provide another round of emergency investments in critical older Americans Act programs** that were supported in bipartisan and bicameral [Senate](#) and [House](#) member letters to congressional leaders.

Action Requested:

Members of Congress must understand how important it is to their older constituents to include OAA funding in another round of coronavirus response.

→**Send a letter from your agency.** If you can send a formal letter to your Members of Congress, please do so this week via an email to your contacts! Use our [template letter](#), and include details on the need locally, such as an increase in the number of older adults you are serving, roles you are playing or could play in vaccination, and the like.

→**Call your Senators and Representatives.** If you can't send a letter from your agency, use our phone script to give your Members a call in their DC offices. And if you do send a letter, please also call! Calling is also a great way to secure an email for the staffer responsible for aging issues—so you can send them your agency's letter, or more informally elevate these issues in an email using our phone script.

→**Urge your stakeholders and local advocates to do the same!** Take just a few minutes to customize our [template grassroots alert](#) and its talking points to reflect your community and drive more calls to Congress! No time? Forward this alert to your colleagues, advisory board members and volunteers and urge them to reach out to their Members of Congress. To elevate our request, we have to be loud and as large in number as possible to get the attention of Congress!

Reach your Members through the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at **202.224.3121** or find their office email address on your [Representative's](#) or [Senator's](#) website. Use the following script or email language to explain why you are calling and what you want your Representative or Senator to do. You can also use [n4a's recent letter](#) if you need more information on the requests we are making of Congress.

Hello, my name is [Your Name] and I am calling from [City, State] to urge Senator/Representative [Name] to do everything [he/she] can do to ensure that funding for Older Americans Act programs is included in another round of coronavirus response!

Congress must not leave older Americans behind, and failing to include this vital

funding may harm older adults who face disproportionate risks from the virus. The Older Americans Act programs and services delivered locally are essential in helping older adults stay safe and healthy at home, and we have been serving significantly more seniors since COVID-19 began. Earlier relief funds have been critical to helping us with this work, but additional funding is now needed. [Add applicable information on timing of when your CARES Act funding will be exhausted.] This cannot wait!

Specifically, we support funding the following Older Americans Act programs in the next relief package:

- *\$750 million for Title III C meals and nutrition services;*
- *\$400 million for Title III B in-home and community supportive services, including \$200 million for AAAs and other community organizations to do their part to ensure that high-risk and hard-to-reach older Americans get access to the vaccine;*
- *\$20 million for the Title VI Native American Aging Programs that provide meals and support to tribal elders;*
- *\$150 million for Title III E caregiver support services; and*
- *\$44 million for Title III D evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention programs*

[Add any detail about why any/all of these asks would be vital in your community, and what the status of current funding is/risk to failing to].

In closing, I urge the Senator/Representative [Name] to insist that Congress include critical OAA funding to keep older Americans safe in the next round of coronavirus response! Older constituents and their families and communities cannot wait much longer for relief. Thank you.

Resources

[n4a Letter to Congress on Emergency OAA Funding for Services, Vaccination Efforts](#)

[Template letter for you to customize and send from your agency!](#)

[Template grassroots alert for you to customize and activate your local network!](#)

Stay tuned to n4a for additional news and advocacy resources as this process moves forward quickly!

If you have questions or concerns about this *Advocacy Alert* or n4a's policy positions, please contact n4a's policy team at policy@n4a.org.