

August 18, 2020 Advocacy Alert



Push for Emergency OAA Funding! Ask Your Representatives to Sign on to the Bipartisan Letter Urging Investments in Vital Aging Programs NOW

August 18, 2020

Progress on the next round of coronavirus relief may be stalled but policy discussions are ongoing, and many lawmakers are poised to act as soon as the current stalemate breaks. [Following calls from n4a](#) in partnership with ADvancing States, Meals on Wheels America and the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP) to include, at a minimum, \$1.1 billion for aging services in the next round of COVID-19 relief legislation, lawmakers are echoing this message to congressional leaders.

Last week, 18 Senators signed a [bipartisan letter](#) led by Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Susan Collins (R-ME) urging Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) to include another round of funding for vital OAA programs in a final emergency supplemental bill.

This week, House lawmakers are following the Senate's lead. Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), a committed congressional champion for the Older Americans Act, is partnering with Representatives Elise Stefanik (R-NY), John Katko (R-NY) and Susan Wild (D-PA) to echo the Senate's request to ensure that congressional leaders include robust OAA funding in the next COVID-19 relief package—**and we need your help to ensure a strong response to this effort!**

The timeline for lawmakers to sign-on to this letter is short, so please contact your Representative(s) TODAY and ask them to sign on to this bipartisan letter that represents a bicameral call to continue to provide robust emergency funding for Older Americans Act programs!

- [Read the bipartisan Bonamici OAA sign-on letter](#)

Representatives' signatures are due by [Thursday, August 20](#), so please do your outreach ASAP, then spread the word in your community to drive more calls!

Action Requested:

→ **Call your Representatives and ask them to sign on to the [letter](#) circulated by Reps. Bonamici, Katko, Stefanik and Wild to include additional OAA funding in the next COVID-19 response package.** Even if you know that this will be a difficult request for your Representative, *please do this outreach anyway*. It's vital that all Representatives understand how critical OAA funding is to older adults and caregivers in this ongoing national health and economic emergency!

STEP 1: Call the DC office and ask for the staff member who handles Older Americans Act and/or Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) funding issues. You can reach them through the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202.224.3121 or find the number on your Member's website.

STEP 2: Tell them about the bipartisan Bonamici OAA Dear Colleague letter and offer to email them a [link to the letter](#) if they have not already seen it. *If your Representative has already signed on to the letter, please thank them and urge them to encourage their House colleagues to sign on as well!*

STEP 3: *If your Representative has not signed on to the letter yet*, let them know exactly *why* you want your Member to support this bipartisan funding request for additional emergency funding for vital OAA programs. Make sure they understand how important OAA programs have been in protecting older Americans during the coronavirus pandemic crisis! If they ask for a staff contact for Rep. Bonamici, they can phone Jack Arriaga at 202.225.0855.

The deadline for signatures is Thursday, AUGUST 20.

→ **Ask other advocates to do the same!** Urge colleagues, advisory board members, volunteers and clients to make calls to their Representatives, as well. **We have a very short window of opportunity, so we need you and your colleagues to act fast on this particular request!** If your Representative(s) needs additional information about how the Aging Network and Area Agencies on Aging have been instrumental in supporting older Americans during this crisis, please share n4a's recent report, [#AAAsAtWork for Older Adults: A Snapshot of Area Agency on Aging Responses to COVID-19](#).

--

If you have questions or concerns about this *Advocacy Alert* or n4a's policy positions, please contact Autumn Campbell at acampbell@n4a.org and Amy Gotwals at agotwals@n4a.org.