

June 10, 2021 Advocacy Alert



Senators Champion OAA Funding!

**Call Your Senators TODAY and Urge Them
to Sign On to a Critical OAA Funding Letter!**

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Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) is once again [leading the charge](#) to invest in Older Americans Act (OAA) programs that provide essential services to an aging nation. This week the Senator circulated a [letter](#) to his colleagues urging them to sign onto a Senate Appropriations Labor/HHS/Education Subcommittee request that doubles FY 2022 funding to \$4.25 billion for OAA programs and services. This request aligns with n4a's appropriations requests and, in a few cases, with President Biden's [recently released budget](#). We are once again thrilled to see our Hill champions calling for critical investments in the programs and services you facilitate and deliver to older adults and their caregivers.

The timeline for lawmakers to sign on to this letter is short, so *please contact your Senators TODAY*. Your advocacy today, tomorrow and throughout this summer is vital to the FY 2022 annual appropriations process and will help determine what next year's OAA funding will be. Even with [bipartisan support in the House](#) and an Administration advocating on behalf of supporting caregivers and boosting home and community-based services for older adults and people with disabilities, achieving this level of investment will be difficult. ***That's why we need you to contact your Senators NOW and drive signatures to the OAA letter—so appropriators recognize the bipartisan support that already exists for boosting funding for these essential programs!***

Last year's letter was signed by 37 Senators and the goal is to surpass that this year. **To date, Senators Cortez Masto, King, Markey, Shaheen, Murphy, Casey, Smith, Cardin, Schatz, Cantwell and Kaine have signed on in support of OAA FY 2022 funding.** If one of these Senators is yours, please reach out and say THANK YOU!

The following Senators signed on last year but need to hear from you so we can secure their commitment again! Senators: Udall, Hassan, Whitehouse, Blumenthal, Baldwin, Booker, Rosen, Peters, Gillibrand, Stabenow, Warren, Bennet, Sinema, Van Hollen, Hirono, Reed, Manchin, Merkley, Klobuchar, Menendez, Brown, Heinrich, Feinstein, Duckworth and Warner.

Please note, if your Senator is not listed above, they still need to hear from you! Whether they are a new Senator or one who didn't sign on in 2020, please make every effort to make the case for why the older adults and caregivers in their states need them to join this letter—or otherwise call for increased OAA funding in their own outreach to the Appropriations Committee, which may be a great alternative for those who might be hesitant to call for a doubling of OAA funding.

We need you to take action to urge your Senators to sign on to this letter to ensure that it receives the strong support needed for the Subcommittee to take this request seriously.

Members' signatures are due by close of business on Thursday, June 17. This means we've got one week to make this happen! So please do your outreach TODAY, then spread the word in your community to drive more calls!

Actions Requested:

→ **Call your Senators and ask them to sign on to the Older Americans Act Dear Colleague letter circulated by Senator Sanders.** Even if you know enough about your Senators' voting history to understand your request is not an easy one, please do this outreach anyway. It's vital that all Senators understand how critical OAA funding is to older adults and caregivers!

STEP 1: Call the DC office and ask for the staff member who handles Older Americans Act or appropriations issues. You can reach them through the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202.224.3121 or find the number on your Senators' website.

STEP 2: Tell them about the Senator Sanders OAA Dear Colleague letter and offer to email them a [link to the letter](#) if they have not already seen it.

STEP 3: Let them know exactly why you want your Senators to sign on to the OAA letter. Give local statistics that demonstrate the need for an increase in OAA funding.* If they ask for a staff contact tell them to contact Michaela Brown at Michaela.Brown@help.senate.gov.

The deadline for signatures is Thursday, June 17.

* For sample talking points to ready your ask, see n4a's [March 30 Advocacy Alert](#).

→ **Ask other advocates to do the same!** Urge colleagues, advisory board members, volunteers and clients to make calls to their Senators, as well. We have a very short window of opportunity, so we need you and your colleagues to act fast on this particular request!

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