

March 4, 2021 Advocacy Alert



Contact Your Senators ASAP! Urge Support for Older Americans Act Relief Funding

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Last week, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the American Rescue Plan Act, a \$1.9 trillion reconciliation relief package that includes significant funds for the Older Americans Act, a one-year, 7.35-percentage-point boost to federal contributions to Medicaid HCBS waivers and \$350 billion in relief for state and local governments.

The Senate has begun the process of debating the bill, with Senate passage expected to take place tomorrow or Saturday. Now is the time to urge your Senators to commit to the critical provisions necessary to support aging communities through a pandemic that has unleashed unprecedented needs and dire consequences for our most vulnerable populations.

Action Requested:

Call or email your Senators to urge them to support the OAA provisions in the reconciliation relief package. Let them know AAAs and Title VI Aging Programs are working diligently to ensure that the needs of aging Americans in their states are met, but that you need this funding to continue to do so. Tell your Senators that this vital funding will allow for greater access to COVID-19 vaccinations among the most vulnerable population—older adults—and will ensure that transportation, meals and access to additional life-sustaining programs for those aging at home are available.

→ **Send an Email.** Adapt our phone script below and email your Senators now. Be sure to customize the template script to 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 support and the like. And if you do send a letter, please also call!

→ **Call your Senators.** Time is of the essence so a phone call is a great option! Use the script below to call your Senators. Calling is also a great way to secure an email address for the staffer responsible for aging issues—so you can send them a direct email now and for future advocacy asks.

Tips on Taking Action:

- Reach your Senators through the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at **202.224.3121** or find their office email address via the [Senator's](#) website. Use the following script or email language to explain why you are calling and what you want your Senator to do.

Hello, my name is [Your Name] and I am calling from [City, State] to urge Senator [Name] to support the critical funding for Older Americans Act programs and services in the current reconciliation relief package.

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 served significantly more seniors since the COVID-19 crisis began nearly a year ago. Earlier relief funds have been critical to helping us with this work, but additional funding is needed now to help ensure we can meet the growing needs of this vulnerable population. This cannot wait!

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

- *\$480 million for OAA Title III B Supportive Services for in-home assistance, transportation, case management, and new efforts to help older adults become vaccinated, including outreach/education, assistance in securing appointments and keeping them, and supporting vaccine clinics in age-friendly locations. This funding stream is our agency's most critical, most flexible source of funding to direct help older adults in our community, including the greatly expanded need we've seen since COVID-19 began.*
- *\$750 million for OAA Title III C Nutrition programs, including home-delivered meals.*

- \$44 million for Title III D evidence-based disease prevention and health promotion programs
- \$145 million for Title III E caregiver supportive services
- \$25 million for Title VI Native American nutrition and supportive services

[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 [Name] to support our critical aging provisions that help [his/her] older constituents, be safe, become vaccinated and stay healthy and independent at home. Thank you.

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.