Next Tuesday’s National Call-In Day on Seniors, Sequestration and the Fiscal Cliff  
Call, Tweet and Spread the Word! 

December 7, 2012

On Tuesday, December 11, aging advocates across the country will participate in a national fiscal cliff call-in day. Sponsored by the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations, of which n4a is a member, the call-in day is an opportunity for you to flood Capitol Hill with your concerns on how the sequester will affect your ability to continue to provide critical supports and services to our country’s most vulnerable older adults.

We are encouraging everyone to call—whether you are a AAA director, staff, older adult, caregiver, family member or any other stakeholder who understands the incredible value of Older Americans Act and other federally funded discretionary programs. The looming sequester will have broad consequences for everybody, so please spread the word as widely as you possibly can!

What’s At Stake

If the proposed 8.2 percent across-the-board cut goes into effect via sequestration on January 2, vital programs in your community would be significantly harmed. Here are just a few of examples of what may happen to some of the Older Americans Act programs under sequestration:

- 17 million fewer congregate and home-delivered meals would be served;
- 1.9 million fewer transportation rides will be available to enable seniors get to the doctor or go grocery shopping;
- 1.5 million fewer people will receive in-home personal care services, such as help with bathing and dressing; and
- More than 57,000 family caregivers would lose access to respite care, counseling and other supportive services that allow them to remain in their critical roles.

Any “savings” from the sequester would pale in comparison to the added costs from premature nursing home placement for seniors who can no longer remain in their homes and communities; poorer nutrition and health; increased falls and other avoidable crises.
How to Take Action

1. To participate, just call your members of Congress by dialing 888-876-6242 (toll-free) and in addition to sharing your story, tell them:

   - The sequester should be averted; and
   - Any major deficit agreement should reflect the following:
     - The $1.5 trillion of reductions in discretionary spending that the 112th Congress and the President already achieved should be counted towards any comprehensive, balanced deficit-reduction plan;
     - Any additional cuts in Older Americans Act and other domestic discretionary programs below the caps previously established should be rejected;
     - We must reduce the deficit through a balanced approach without increasing poverty or income inequality;
     - Changes to Medicare and Medicaid must not include benefit cuts or simply shifting costs on to beneficiaries or states; and
     - Social Security does not contribute to the deficit and so should not be on the chopping block.

2. Use social media to weigh in with lawmakers as well as other advocates and concerned consumers. Use the #seniors hashtag in your Twitter messages, encourage your Facebook followers to speak out and call in on December 11, and help your fellow aging advocates around the country raise the volume on the risks older adults face from arbitrary sequesters or rash policy decisions!

Resources and Tools

n4a has developed tools for you to use to reach out to Congress and to engage other advocates in your community. Our budget campaign webpage has a primer on the fiscal cliff; talking points on potential cuts/reforms; fact sheets and state-by-state data on the negative effects of sequestration; a sample op-ed to place in your local media; and advocacy success stories and tools from your colleagues around the country.

n4a members will continue to receive the latest developments via our Legislative Updates in the weeks to come, but we urge all advocates to weigh in today with your entire congressional delegation. Please let n4a know how your efforts are going. n4a’s Public Policy and Advocacy staff: Amy Gotwals and Neal Karkhanis, 202.872.0888 or agotwals@n4a.org, nkarkhanis@n4a.org.