



Advocacy**ALERT**

FOR n4a MEMBERS & ALLIES

Congressional Recesses Ahead: Reach Out to Your Members of Congress Today

February 9, 2017

As we mentioned in our February 6 [Advocacy Alert](#), Members of the House and Senate will be back in their districts and states February 18-26, and we encourage you to reach out now to schedule a site visit or meeting during the upcoming Congressional recess. There are also several opportunities for advocacy on critical health care issues affecting older adults and caregivers that you may want to disseminate to your network of stakeholders during the upcoming recess.

We encourage all AAAs and Title VI programs to request an in-person meeting or better yet, a visit, from your Members to see your programs in action! There is no better way to demonstrate the value of the keeping older adults healthy and the Aging Network's mission to help millions of seniors age with health, independence and dignity, than by inviting your Representative(s) or Senators to see these programs at work. Use the recess opportunity to show Congress why it is critical to protect vital aging and health care services for seniors and to protect and increase federal investments in important OAA programs!

If you haven't yet contacted your Member's scheduler to request time during an upcoming recess, reach out now! (U.S. Capitol Switchboard: 202. 224.3121. Email: www.house.gov and www.senate.gov)

Key Messages This Month:

The Affordable Care Act is Important to Older Adults and Caregivers—No Repeal without Replacement! Many national advocacy organizations and grassroots efforts are focused on protecting the Affordable Care Act and ensuring that lawmakers fully consider and demonstrate how they will preserve critical protections for older adults before taking steps to repeal the law.

n4a recently released a *Policy Brief*, [What Would ACA Repeal Mean for Older Adults, Caregivers and the Aging Network?](#), which outlines implications that ACA repeal would have for older adults and the Aging Network, including key questions for lawmakers to consider. **We encourage AAAs and Title VI aging programs to share this brief with your Members of Congress, and to bring up these questions during your meetings and visits.**

Medicaid is Critical to the Health and Well-Being of Many Older Adults!

Lawmakers are starting to consider proposals to restructure Medicaid in ways that could significantly change how the federal government supports states in providing Medicaid services, putting both vulnerable older adults and state budgets at risk. These proposals could have major implications for Medicaid long-term care, including home and community-based services.

Ensure your Representatives and Senators understand the value of Medicaid HCBS, and encourage them to use your agency and n4a as resources as proposals are developed. **n4a will have more information about these proposals and possible next steps as they develop, but it is critical to speak up now about the importance of Medicaid to keeping older adults healthy and supporting them in their homes and communities.**

Protect Funding for Older Americans Act—Reject Cuts to NDD Programs, Including OAA! As we detailed in our recent [Advocacy Alert](#), lawmakers will soon start debating the federal budget and funding for FY 2018. Some in Congress have proposed major cuts to non-defense discretionary (NDD) funding, which could include OAA and other aging programs. Make sure your Members know how important OAA is to the health and well-being of the older adults you serve. **Scheduling a visit from your Member of Congress to see your programs at work is a particularly effective way to reinforce this message!**

Ways You Can Take Action in February:

- **Reach out today to invite Members of Congress to see your work in action.** Encourage your Representatives and Senators to visit your programs or attend your events. Use these visits to educate your elected officials about key programs your agency operates and how that supports their constituents (both older adults and caregivers). Also, use n4a's newest *Policy Brief*, [What Policymakers Must Know About an Aging Nation](#), to educate your Members of Congress about key national aging and health care issues. You can reach out to the local office or always use the U.S. Capitol Switchboard: (202) 224-3121 or send an email: www.house.gov and www.senate.gov. And as always, let n4a know what you are doing and take pictures!
- **Participate in a national day of action or attend a local Town Hall.** Saturday, February 18 will be a national day of action on health care and ACA. Many Members of Congress have scheduled town halls or other events on this day, or during recess. [Use this spreadsheet](#) to find out if there are events in your district and state, and spread the word about these opportunities to your local stakeholders! Whether you attend professionally or personally, we believe these events are great opportunities for you to elevate aging issues in the larger health care conversation happening in Congress and across the nation right now.
- **Engage your stakeholders and the media to spread the word.** Use your provider networks, Advisory Board and the people you serve to spread the word about the good work you are doing locally. It is more important than ever to get people talking about how important health care and aging services are to the older adults and caregivers you serve!

Other Reminders:

- **Sign on to the NDD United letter by tomorrow, February 10!** There is still time for national, state and local groups to [sign on to a letter](#) encouraging lawmakers to protect NDD funding this year. Also, spread the word to your local networks!
- **Attend the n4a Aging Policy Briefing:** There is no more important time to be in DC to advocate for your work than right now! We hope you will join us at the [Aging Policy Briefing & Capitol Hill Day](#) to learn the latest aging and health care policy updates from national experts and to meet with your Members of Congress in DC. If you are already registered, make sure you are setting up your Capitol Hill meetings now!

Let us know how your agency is getting involved, and thank you for your advocacy on these important issues!

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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.