



Advocacy**ALERT** A MEMBER BENEFIT

Help Push for OAA Funding Increases: Call Your Senators!

***Ask Them to Sign on to the Sanders Letter Requesting an
Investment in Cost-Effective Older Americans Act Programs
March 3, 2016***

Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) has again this year circulated a letter to his fellow Senators requesting their signatures in support of a request to Senate Appropriations Labor/HHS/Education Subcommittee leaders to increase funding support to Older Americans Act (OAA) programs by at least 12 percent in FY 2017. The annual appropriations process that determines FY 2017 OAA funding is just beginning. This letter will be one of thousands sent to the Appropriations Committee's leaders asking for particular funding levels for thousands of federal discretionary programs.

This is Senator Sanders' fifth time taking the lead in circulating such a letter and he is requesting funding increases of at least 12 percent (over FY 2016) for all OAA programs and services. Senator Sanders, who is also the Ranking Minority Member of the HELP Subcommittee with jurisdiction over OAA reauthorization, goes on to note that "a 12 percent increase, though still insufficient, would be an important step toward meeting existing demand" for OAA programs and services.

- [Read the Sanders OAA sign-on letter.](#)

The letter serves as a reminder that OAA programs require increased resources to maintain current programs due to population growth and cost inflation—as well as restore the cuts made by sequestration and federal budget reductions in the past few years. In fact, n4a's FY 2017 OAA appropriations request to Congress will echo that message. In the meantime, n4a strongly supports Senator Sanders' effort, and we are also working with House members to circulate letters supporting increases for OAA appropriations, so stay tuned for those!

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.

Senators' signatures are due by close of business on Thursday, March 10 so please do your outreach TODAY and early next week!

Action Requested:

→ Contact both of your Senators and ask them to sign on to the letter circulated by Senator Sanders on OAA funding. Even if you know enough about your Senator's 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.
- ✓ **STEP 2:** Tell them about the Sanders OAA 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 the Senator to sign on to the Sanders letter. Give local statistics that demonstrate the need for an increase in OAA funding. If they ask for a staff contact for Senator Sanders, tell them to contact Michaela Yarnell, telephone at 202.224.5480.

The deadline for signatures is COB Thursday, March 10.

→ **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 short window of opportunity, so we need you and your colleagues to act fast!

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.