



Advocacy**ALERT** A MEMBER BENEFIT

House Letter Asks for OAA III B Increase, Call Your Representatives This Week! *Ask Them to Sign on to the Bonamici-Murphy Letter*

March 8, 2016

One of n4a's top appropriations priorities for FY 2017 is to increase the funding for Older Americans Act Title III B Supportive Services. As our forthcoming 2016 Policy Priorities spotlight, it is unconscionable that funding for III B has fallen in recent years to its lowest levels since 2004, yet the demand and cost for providing services increases significantly each year.

It is long past time to provide an increase for Title III B services—and now n4a will be joined by Members of Congress in asking the Appropriations Committee for that increase for the coming year! As n4a has reported, President Obama included a \$10 million (3 percent) increase in his FY 2017 budget he sent to Congress in February. n4a strongly supports that request at a minimum, with our larger goal of restoring III B and all OAA programs to at least FY 2010 levels, which would require a \$20.6 million (6 percent) increase.

n4a has been working with House OAA champions to advocate for a III B increase and so is pleased to announce that Reps. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) and Patrick Murphy (D-FL) are circulating a "Dear Colleague" letter, asking other Representatives to join their appeal to the House Appropriations Committee. The letter echoes the \$10 million boost requested by the President and details the value of III B funding to developing and delivering a wide range of HCBS options for older adults in communities across the country. [Read the Bonamici-Murphy Letter.](#)

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.

We expect there will be other House letters calling for increases in other OAA titles and we will share those as they emerge. But it's important to note that while there are many other advocates for meals, elder justice, lifespan respite and other critical programs, **it is essential that the AAA network gets LOUD on this III B request letter.**

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

Signatures are due by close of business on Friday, March 18 so please do your outreach TODAY or TOMORROW to your Representative(s) and use this next week to engage other local stakeholders to take action as well!

Action Requested:

→ As our [March 3 Advocacy Alert](#) detailed, there is a **Senate letter** being circulated by Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) that calls for a 12 percent across-the-board increase for all OAA programs. If you haven't called your Senators yet, do that first—the Sanders letter closes this Thursday! [Read more about calling your Senators.](#)

→ **Contact all Representatives serving in your area and ask them to [sign on to the letter circulated by Reps. Bonamici and Murphy](#) on OAA III B Supportive Services funding.**

- ✓ **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 Bonamici-Murphy 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 Representative to sign on to the letter. Give local statistics that demonstrate the need for an increase in OAA III B funding.

The deadline for signatures is COB Friday, March 18.

→ **Ask other advocates to do the same!** Urge your vendors/providers, advisory board members, volunteers and clients to make calls to their Representatives, as well. *It's critical that we have more than just AAA directors calling Congress on this letter, so please do all you can to amplify the message and engage others who understand the value of III B Supportive Services.*

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.