Push Congress to Boost Funding for OAA!
Join the National Call-In Efforts This Week

May 12, 2014

As n4a’s April 22 and May 9 Advocacy Alerts indicated, this is a critical time to advance funding for Older Americans Act (OAA), elder justice, falls prevention, ADRCs and other vital aging services that rely upon a foundation of annual federal investment. We hope you’ve been able to send letters/emails to your congressional delegations that build upon n4a’s annual appropriations request letter but with rich local examples and statistics! If not, please act this week.

Additionally, to raise the volume of noise from aging advocates nationwide, n4a and all our allies in the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations are encouraging grassroots calls to Congress tomorrow and Wednesday (May 13-14) to press for increased OAA funding, as well as OAA reauthorization.

AAAs and Title VIs: Please get the word out immediately to your networks, providers, stakeholders, community leaders, caregivers and other consumers—cast the net as widely as possible—that they should take 5-10 minutes and call Congress over the next two days. What follows is a consumer-friendly alert that you can use as is, or, better yet, customize with state or local-specific information!

Take Action:

May is Older Americans Month: Tell Congress that Funding Decisions Matter to Older Adults!

As the nation celebrates Older Americans Month to recognize older Americans for their contributions to our country, Congress meanwhile is making critical decisions about funding services and supports for older adults. This is an important time for Congress to hear from you about the importance of funding Older Americans Act programs, elder justice initiatives and Aging and Disability Resource Centers in your community.
This year's Older Americans Month theme focuses on injury prevention: Safe Today, Healthy Tomorrow. We need your help in voicing concerns about adequate funding for Older Americans Act programs that help create safe and healthy communities for our nation's aging population.

About OAA: The OAA is the backbone of the nation's non-Medicaid-funded long-term services and supports system. It funds critical programs and services that help older adults maintain their health and independence, such as home care, congregate and home-delivered meals, case management, caregiver support, transportation, health promotion and disease prevention, legal services and job training and employment opportunities for low-income older adults. Together, these services save taxpayer dollars by enabling seniors to remain independent and healthy in their own homes, where they prefer to be, and where they are less likely to need more costly care paid for through Medicare and Medicaid.

The Problem: For many years, programs like Older Americans Act (OAA) have faced level funding and cuts while the need for services has increased exponentially. In fact, Congress has yet to reauthorize OAA even though it expired in 2011. (They have done work to advance bills, but it's far from the finish line.) The Elder Justice Act was passed in 2010, but has not yet received the funding it needs to support elder abuse prevention and Adult Protective Services. And a consumer-assistance program, Aging and Disability Resource Centers, needs continued funding to develop robust ways to help caregivers, older adults and people of all ages with disabilities find the services and supports they need to live as independently as possible.

If you support these cost-effective, local programs that help seniors and caregivers, please take action immediately!

Step 1: Call 888-277-8686 then follow the prompts to be connected to your Member of Congress. Once you are patched through, ask the staff to deliver the following message to your Senator or Representative (or customize your own!):

I understand decisions are being made about funding for programs serving older adults. I urge Representative/Senator _____ to restore funding lost to budget cuts for all Older Americans Act programs, provide funding for the Elder Justice Initiative and continue development of Aging and Disability Resource Centers. Please also ensure that the Older Americans Act is reauthorized this year! These programs and services are very important to (me/my family/my community). Thank you for your consideration.

Step 2: Call back multiple times until you’ve left messages for both of your Senators and your Representative.

Step 3: Please encourage your friends and colleagues to call as well. Congressional office gauge interest in issues based on the number of calls they receive from constituents, so aging advocates need to get loud May 13 and 14 in order to be heard!

Thanks in advance for your advocacy on this urgent issue.

If you have questions about this Advocacy Alert, please contact n4a’s Public Policy and Advocacy team, Amy Gotwals and Autumn Campbell at 202.872.0888 or agotwals@n4a.org, acampbell@n4a.org.