



Advocacy**ALERT** FOR n4a MEMBERS & ALLIES

Senate Stalled on OAA Reauthorization Tell Your Senators to Keep Up the Momentum on OAA!

July 17, 2019

Throughout the spring and summer, the Senate has ambitiously and diligently pursued a bipartisan reauthorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA), which expires at the end of September. Key lawmakers and Congressional staff have been working with national and local advocates to learn about issues, collect Older Americans Act reauthorization proposals, and develop a bipartisan draft reauthorization proposal, which [n4a commented on](#) in June.

Despite this bipartisan progress in the Senate, further movement is currently stalled over issues related to the federal funding formula in the Act.

Why Senate Action is Needed

The Senate has been first out of the gate on OAA negotiations with the goal of getting a reauthorization passed by the time the current law expires on September 30. Last month a bipartisan working group from the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) and Aging Committees released a draft bill that would reauthorize the Older Americans Act, *Modernization of the Older Americans Act Amendments*.

However, before the working group could begin incorporating stakeholder feedback and formally introduce a reauthorization proposal—[including n4a's comments](#)—controversy over the funding formula stalled ongoing negotiations. While n4a does not weigh in with Congress on the details of formula conversations, such as those taking place in the Senate, we know some of our members are working with their Senators on the proposed changes to the formula's "hold harmless" provision. Our call to action does not negate those advocacy efforts but aims to help move reauthorization overall.

Grassroots pressure on your Senators is essential to jumpstart conversations and ensure vital OAA programs and services that help older Americans live with maximum health, independence and dignity are reauthorized before September 30.

We ultimately want to bring a bipartisan reauthorization bill to the HELP Committee and the full Senate for passage. Please join n4a to help move OAA forward this summer! You can help in several ways.

Take Action

- **Reach out to your Senators to let them know that you want the Senate to continue working on achieving a bipartisan reauthorization this fall.** At this point, advocacy is most needed in the Senate, but we will have House messages for you in the coming days. **If your Senator sits on the [Senate HELP Committee](#),** it is especially important that you reach out in support of moving reauthorization forward!
 - **CALL:** Capitol Switchboard (202-224-3121) can connect you to your Senator's DC office.
 - **EMAIL:** Go to each Senator's website and submit your comments there. To find their websites go to www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm
- **If your Senator is not on the [HELP Committee](#), ask them to reach out to their HELP Committee colleagues.** OAA advocates will overcome the current impasse only when constituents and their Senators show support for moving the bill forward. Please ask your Senator to help advance OAA reauthorization this summer. **An effective strategy to show broad support for this bill is to urge Senate offices call the HELP Committee to ask about the status of the reauthorization negotiations.** This shows support for getting through the tricky formula conversation.
- **Engage your grassroots network to advocate for OAA reauthorization!** To get this done, our voices must be loud and numerous! Activate your networks through email, social media and any other advocacy tools to contact Congress and push for OAA reauthorization to be achieved by September 30. Consider engaging your advisory board/committee members, the provider organizations you work with, the older adults and caregivers you work with, and other aging advocates in your community.

Use [n4a's OAA Advocacy Toolkit](#) to Assist Your Efforts!

Our toolkit has everything you need to take action, including:

- a sample [advocacy alert](#);
- [talking points](#);
- social media [messages](#) and [images](#);
- a [one-pager fact sheet about the Act](#);
- n4a's [Recommendations for OAA Reauthorization](#); and
- background about the Act, including a [timeline of milestones](#) in the OAA's history. www.n4a.org/OAA

Stay tuned for more updates from n4a. Thank you for your advocacy on this important issue!

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.