Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act

Since 2011, n4a’s top policy priority has been to reauthorize the Older Americans Act to meet the needs of today’s and tomorrow’s seniors. n4a believes priority should be given to preserving the Act’s local flexibility; providing adequate authorization levels; strengthening the Aging Network’s role and capacity in the coordination and provision of long-term services and supports; and improving community preparedness for an aging population.

The Older Americans Act (OAA) provides essential services every year to nearly 11 million older adults and caregivers, including information and referral/assistance, in-home supports, nutrition programs, transportation, caregiver support, job training, legal services and protection from abuse and financial exploitation. n4a’s members, the 622 Area Agencies on Aging and 256 Title VI Native American aging programs, work on the front lines of aging every day, providing a broad range of services and supports that enhance the lives of older adults and implementing the vision of the OAA in communities all across the country.

On July 14, 2015, the OAA reached a milestone: the 50th anniversary of this landmark legislation to ensure that older adults can age successfully with dignity, health and independence. Just days later, the Senate unanimously passed the bipartisan Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2015 (s. 192), which n4a endorsed. On March 21, 2016, after months of negotiation over key modifications to s. 192, the House passed, by voice vote, House Amendment to s. 192. n4a also endorsed the bipartisan compromise reauthorization that received House approval.

As we went to press on April 7, the OAA reauthorization bill, s. 192, as Amended, passed the Senate under Unanimous Consent. We look forward to celebrating the signing into law of this bipartisan compromise bill soon.

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