

February 7, 2020

The Hon. Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader  
The Hon. Chuck Schumer, Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. Nancy Pelosi, Speaker  
The Hon. Kevin McCarthy, Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Hon. Lamar Alexander, Chairman  
The Hon. Patty Murray, Ranking Member  
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and  
Pensions  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. Bobby Scott, Chairman  
The Hon. Virginia Foxx, Ranking Member  
Committee on Education and Labor  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leaders McConnell and Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Chairman Alexander, Ranking Member Murray, Chairman Scott and Ranking Member Foxx:

On behalf of the undersigned 127 organizations with a vested interest in the well-being of America's older adults and caregivers, we write to you today in support of the *Supporting Older Americans Act of 2020* (H.R. 4334) to reauthorize the Older Americans Act (OAA).

We recognize and appreciate the diligent bipartisan and bicameral efforts to reauthorize the Older Americans Act, which expired on September 30, 2019. Achieving a reauthorization of this critical Act that reaffirms and protects its mission will ensure the sustainability of vital OAA programs, as well as the health, dignity, and independence of the older Americans and their caregivers who depend on them.

The OAA is essential to developing, coordinating, and delivering home and community-based services that help older adults remain in their homes and communities as they age. Many individuals served by OAA-funded programs would otherwise be at significant risk of hunger, isolation, abuse, and losing their ability to choose where they want to age. OAA-supported programs are provided to more than 11 million seniors and their caregivers annually, and include, but are not limited to, home-delivered and congregate nutrition services, in-home supportive services, multipurpose senior centers, transportation, caregiver support, disease prevention and health promotion, community service employment, the long-term care ombudsman program, and services to prevent the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults.

By keeping seniors healthy and in their communities for more than 50 years, OAA programs have also delayed or prevented the need for more expensive institutional care for many older adults, which is often paid for through Medicare or Medicaid. OAA services can effectively save taxpayer, state, and federal dollars and promote efficiencies within the health care system.

The *Supporting Older Americans Act of 2020* builds upon both the House-passed *Dignity in Aging Act* (H.R. 4334) and the Senate-introduced *Modernization of the Older Americans Act Amendments* (S. 3057) to incorporate a number of important priorities articulated by stakeholder organizations. Most importantly, the bicameral compromise calls for necessary investments in the OAA by increasing funding authorizations over the next five years—a top priority of the undersigned organizations and the most critical need of the Aging Network authorized by the OAA.

Other priorities within the bill address research and demonstrations, Native American services, local planning and development, supports for those living with dementia and social isolation, legal services, nutrition, in-home supportive services, disease prevention and health promotion, multigenerational collaboration, and family caregiver supports. We appreciate that the *Supporting Older Americans Act of 2020* preserves the numerous ways in which this Act works so well at the federal, state, and local level, on behalf of the older adults and caregivers for whom it is a lifeline to dignity, independence, health, safety, and economic security.

Thank you for your commitment to this important issue. The undersigned organizations represent a diverse set of stakeholders, and we stand ready to build upon existing momentum to swiftly advance the compromise bill through Congress and to the President's desk.

Sincerely,

AARP

Academy of Geriatric Physical Therapy, a component of the APTA

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

ADvancing States

Aging Life Care Association

AHEPA Management Company

Alliance for Aging Research

Alliance to End Hunger

Allies for Independence

ALS Association

Alzheimer's Alliance Michigan State University

Alzheimer's Association

Alzheimer's Foundation of America

Alzheimer's Impact Movement

Alzheimer's Los Angeles

Alzheimer's New Jersey

Alzheimer's Tennessee

American Association For Geriatric Psychiatry

American Association of Service Coordinators

American Association on Health and Disability

American Council of the Blind

American Geriatrics Society  
American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association  
American Network of Community Options & Resources (ANCOR)  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Physical Therapy Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Therapeutic Recreation Association  
Argentum  
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs  
Baylor Scott & White Health  
Better Medicare Alliance  
Blinded Veterans Association (BVA)  
Brain Injury Association of America  
Caregiver Action Network  
Caregiver Voices United  
Caring Across Generations  
CaringKind  
Center for Medicare Advocacy  
Center for Public Representation  
Center to Advance Palliative Care  
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation  
College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists (CPNP)  
CommunicationFIRST  
Community Catalyst  
Congregation of Our Lady of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces  
Corporation for Supportive Housing  
Daughters of Penelope  
Dementia Alliance International  
Easterseals  
Family Voices  
Florida Agencies Serving the Blind  
Feeding America  
Food Research & Action Center  
Generations United  
Guide Dogs for the Blind  
Health Benefits ABCs  
Home Instead Senior Care  
Home Modification Occupational Therapy Alliance-HMOTA  
International Association for Indigenous Aging  
Justice in Aging  
Lakeshore Foundation  
LEAD Coalition (Leaders Engaged on Alzheimer's Disease)  
LeadingAge  
Livpact Inc.  
Local Initiatives Support Corporation  
Lutheran Services in America  
MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger

Meals on Wheels America  
Medicare Rights Center  
National Able Network  
National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA)  
National Adult Protective Services Association  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Affordable Housing Trust  
National Alliance for Caregiving  
National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA)  
National Assn. of RSVP Directors  
National Association for Home Care & Hospice  
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)  
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD)  
National Association of Counties (NACo)  
National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)  
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)  
National Association of Regional Councils  
National Association of Senior Legal Hotlines  
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)  
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators  
National Association of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs (NASOP)  
National Community Action Partnership  
National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC)  
National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care  
National Council on Aging  
National Council on Independent Living  
National Health Council  
National Housing Trust  
National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty  
National Respite Coalition  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies  
Ohio Council for Cognitive Health  
PHI  
Planetree International  
Prevent Blindness  
Program in Occupational Therapy, Washington University School of Medicine  
Region 10 LEAP  
RESULTS  
Retirement Housing Foundation  
Rossetti Enterprises Inc.  
Sanford/Good Samaritan Society  
Silvernest  
Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future  
The Arc of the United States  
The Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration  
The Carroll Center for the Blind

The Episcopal Church  
The Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society  
The Gerontological Society of America  
The Jewish Federations of North America  
Trust for America's Health (TFAH)  
United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries  
United Spinal Association  
UsAgainstAlzheimer's  
Village to Village Network  
VisionServe Alliance  
Volunteers of America  
Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER)

cc: Members of the United States Senate  
Members of the United States House of Representatives