



***Media Kit:
LCAO Invest in Older Americans Campaign***

Older Americans Month 2007



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This toolkit is designed to assist your community organizations in the planning and promoting events during Older Americans Month in May 2007.

The Media Kit includes:

- The LCAO and its members
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- Sample Letters to the Editor
- Fact sheet on the Older Americans Act



Leadership Council of Aging Organizations

William (Larry) Minnix, Jr., Chair

The LCAO Invest in Older Americans Campaign is an aggressive lobbying and grassroots effort in support of funding increases for the Older Americans Act (OAA). This campaign will involve the active participation of LCAO member organizations and their memberships across the country.

The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) is a coalition of national nonprofit organizations concerned with the well-being of America's older population and committed to representing their interest in the policy-making arena. Our 54 members offer expertise and advocacy on a broad range of issues affecting the elderly and those who care for them. We focus on ensuring social justice and fiscal responsibility for an aging society.

The LCAO played an influential role in the passage of the 2006 reauthorization of the OAA. Most recently, we were successful in advocating for FY 2007 funding increases for the congregate and home-delivered meals programs and the older worker community service program.

The LCAO is committed to building on this momentum with an aggressive advocacy push that capitalizes on the Congress' recent support for new programs and responsibilities under the OAA, and delivers a clear and consistent message on the need for significant increases in funding for all OAA programs.

The Leadership Council of Aging Organization's members:

AARP
AFL-CIO
AFSCME Retiree Program
Alliance for Aging Research
Alliance for Retired Americans
Alzheimer's Association
American Association for International Aging
American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
American Federation of Teachers Program on Retirement & Retirees
American Foundation for the Blind
American Geriatrics Society
American Postal Workers Union Retirees
American Public Health Association
American Society of Consultant Pharmacists
American Society on Aging
Association Nacional Pro Personas Mayores/National Association for Hispanic Elderly
Association for Gerontology and Human Development in Historically Black Colleges and Universities
Association of Jewish Aging Services of North America
B'nai B'rith International

Catholic Health Association of the United States
Eldercare America, Inc./National Alliance for Caregiving
Experience Works
Families USA
The Gerontological Society of America
Gray Panthers
International Union, United Auto Workers
Meals On Wheels Association of America
Military Officers Association of America
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
National Adult Day Services Association
National Asian Pacific Center on Aging
National Association for Home Care & Hospice
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
National Association of Foster Grandparent Program Directors
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs
National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers
National Association of Retired and Senior Volunteer Program Directors, Inc.
National Association of Senior Companion Project Directors
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs
National Association of State Units on Aging
National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc.
National Citizens' Coalition for Nursing Home Reform
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
National Council On Aging
National Hispanic Council on Aging
National Indian Council on Aging, Inc.
National Osteoporosis Foundation
National Senior Citizens Law Center
OWL, The Voice of Midlife and Older Women
Service Employees International Union
United Jewish Communities
Volunteers of America

For more information on the LCAO and its activities visit: www.lcao.org.

Helpful tips on planning an event for Older Americans Month:

- Contact your local aging programs and service providers to inform them of your plans, as well as enlist their support for your Older Americans Month event(s).
- Invite diverse groups to co-sponsor the events, i.e. local businesses, social clubs, health care providers, etc.
- Remember you want to reach as many people as possible in all regions of your city, town or county. Invite local and even state and federal politicians to the event.
- Assign responsibilities to volunteers concerning the arrangements for publicity, activity planning, etc. Choose a spokesperson for each event, as well as a senior citizen who could tell their story about how OAA programs help them.
- Ask local radio stations to broadcast from the event.
- At the end of April, send out the “Letter to the Editor” in the Media Kit on your organization’s letterhead.
- Print copies of the Older Americans Act Fact Sheet and materials on the services offered by your agency that are funded through the OAA. Assign volunteers to distribute these fliers to the public at the events.
- Have a petition that people could sign at the event that states that they support funding for programs that help senior citizens.
- A sample media advisory is included in this Media Kit. Send out the advisory two weeks before the event.
- Call all local media outlets two days before the event.
- Distribute a press release on the day of your event. After the event follow-up with the media to assure coverage. Send thank you notes to all your volunteers and sponsors.

Local Agency's Letterhead

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
CONTACT:**

SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY

In May celebrate Older Americans Month, and show your support for our senior citizens and the programs that they need to remain healthy, and independent in our community

There are over 37 million Americans over the age of 65, which is 12.4 percent of the population. Many of these senior citizens depend on Older Americans Act services, such as home-delivered meals, congregate meals, senior centers, family caregiver support, transportation services, adult day care, and personal care services, among other supportive services.

The President's 2008 budget proposal would cut Older Americans Act programs by \$109 million, or 6 percent, at a time when funding should increase to meet the needs of a growing older population.

Incremental funding increases in the OAA over the last several years have not kept pace with inflation or the growing population of individuals eligible for services for two decades. As a result unmet needs and growing waiting lists for services exist throughout the country.

Join us at the following events to acknowledge the major contributions that our older Americans have made for our country, and to also demonstrate that you oppose cuts to Older Americans Act services and support a significant increase in funding for these programs.

**EVENT:
SPONSOR(S):
DATE: TIME:
LOCATION:**

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 2007

CONTACT: Media Contact
Telephone #

Agency's name sponsors Event to celebrate Older Americans Month.

LOCATION – On _____ people of all ages joined together to celebrate Older Americans Month, which is celebrated every May. The event was sponsored by _____ the theme of this year's event was _____.

The event was designed to show support for programs that help senior citizens live healthy independent lives in our community. The President's 2008 budget proposal would cut Older Americans Act programs by \$109 million, or 6 percent, at a time when funding should increase to meet the needs of a growing older population.

Incremental funding increases in the OAA over the last several years have not kept pace with inflation or the growing population of individuals eligible for services for two decades. As a result unmet needs and growing waiting lists for services exist throughout the country.

The Older Americans Act funds Meals On Wheels, congregate meals, home and community-based care, senior centers, family caregiver support, transportation services, prevention of elder abuse, older worker training and employment, the long-term care ombudsman program, and legal services, among other supportive services.

Insert quote from your agency director and co-sponsors here
Also insert a quote from a local senior citizen who benefits from the OAA programs.

The Older Americans Act programs reauthorized in 2006 are vital to our nation's challenge to meet the growing needs of the older generation who will be 20 percent of our population by 2030.

It is important for our nation to invest in services for senior citizens. We encourage our federal representatives to oppose the budget proposal and support a 10 percent across-the-board increase in funding for all Older Americans Act programs.

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Include description of your agency and any event co-sponsors here.

Local Agency's Letterhead

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

Once again we will celebrate ***Older Americans Month*** in May. This year, the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) consisting of 54 national aging organizations has launched the "***Invest in Older Americans***" campaign in support of increased funding to the Older Americans Act.

This campaign calls on all Americans to ask their representatives in Congress to invest in the Older Americans Act programs that help seniors remain independent in their own homes. The Older Americans Act funds aging services such as Meals On Wheels, home and community-based care, senior centers, family caregiver support, prevention of elder abuse, older worker training and employment, transportation, the long-term care ombudsman program and legal services, among other supportive services.

The President has proposed to eliminate the Older Americans Act health promotion and disease prevention program and Alzheimer's disease demonstration grants, and to dramatically reduce funding for the Senior Community Service Employment Program. The fiscal year 2008 budget proposal would cut Older Americans Act funding by a total of \$109 million, or 6 percent, at a time when funding should increase to meet the needs of a growing older population.

Incremental funding increases in the OAA over the last several years have not kept pace with inflation or the growing population of individuals eligible for services for two decades. If funding since fiscal year 2002 had simply kept pace with inflation and the increasing number of seniors, it would be more than \$400 million higher than its current level. As a result unmet needs and growing waiting lists for services exist throughout the country.

The best way Americans can celebrate Older Americans Month, as well as pay tribute to our senior citizens who have contributed so much to our country, is to ask members of Congress to oppose these cuts, and request a 10 percent funding increase for all Older Americans Act programs. Your call or e-mail to Congress will assure that we "***Invest in Older Americans.***"

Name of Agency Representative

Consumer

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

I am XX years old and visit my local senior center every week. While there, I get XXX, XXX and XXX, and this contributes greatly to my quality of life. Without the senior center, I would have to XXX. I view the services I receive at the senior center as America delivering on its promise to its elders.

Senior centers and other programs that help seniors remain independent in their own homes are funded by the federal government through the Older Americans Act (OAA). These programs include Meals On Wheels, home and community-based care, family caregiver support, prevention of elder abuse, older worker training and employment, transportation, the long-term care ombudsman program and legal services and more.

The proposed federal budget for next year would eliminate the OAA health promotion and disease prevention program and Alzheimer's disease demonstration grants, and to dramatically reduce funding for the Senior Community Service Employment Program. The fiscal year 2008 budget proposal would cut OAA funding by a total of \$109 million, or 6 percent, at a time when funding should increase to meet the needs of a growing older population.

Incremental funding increases in the OAA over the last several years have not kept pace with inflation or the growing population of individuals eligible for services for two decades. If funding since fiscal year 2002 had simply kept pace with inflation and the increasing number of seniors, it would be more than \$400 million higher than its current level. As a result unmet needs and growing waiting lists for services exist throughout the country.

May is Older Americans Month. The best way Americans can pay tribute to our senior citizens who have contributed so much to our country is to ask members of Congress to oppose these cuts and instead increase funding for Older Americans Act programs. That would show me that the federal government is delivering on its promise.

Name of Client



OLDER AMERICANS ACT FACT SHEET

The Older Americans Act

Since its inception in 1965, the Older Americans Act (OAA) has been the foundation of services for older adults in the United States and forms the nucleus of our national system of home and community-based services for older Americans. The OAA provides funding to states for a range of community planning and service programs to older Americans at risk of losing their independence. Since its enactment, the OAA has been amended fifteen times, most recently in 2006, to expand the scope of services, increase local control and responsibility, and add more protections for the elderly.

The Aging Network

To develop and implement the wide array of OAA services, a system of federal, state and local agencies, known as the aging network was established. The core of the aging network is the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA), 56 State and Territorial Agencies on Aging, 650 Area Agencies on Aging, 240 Title VI Native American aging programs, and over 30,000 service provider organizations. This critical aging infrastructure is the backbone of our nation's home and community-based long-term care system offering support to older persons and persons with disabilities.

OAA Programs and Services

Through the aging network, each year more than **eight million older Americans** receive critical support such as nutrition, in-home care, transportation, disease prevention/health promotion, long-term care ombudsman, senior employment and other social supports essential to maintaining their independence.

One-half million families are provided assistance vital to their role as caregivers for older persons under the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP), which was added to the Act in 2000. The NFCSP provides grants to AAAs/Title VI programs to help family members who are caring for their older loved ones who are ill or who have disabilities.

The wide range of OAA services administered by the aging network enables it to direct consumers to service choices that best meet their individual needs. In particular, AAAs/Title VI programs play a pivotal role in assessing community needs and developing programs that respond to those needs. They often serve as portals to care, assessing multiple service needs, determining eligibility, authorizing or purchasing services and monitoring the appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of services.

These federal dollars also leverage other sources of funding for AAAs/Title VI programs. According to the Administration on Aging (AoA): "In FY 2003 ...state and local communities leveraged approximately \$2 from other sources for every \$1 of federal funding; for intensive in-home services, the ratio was closer to \$3 to \$1."

The Challenges Ahead

Incremental funding increases in the OAA over the last several years have not kept pace with inflation or the growing population of individuals eligible for services for two decades. As a result unmet needs and growing waiting lists for services exist throughout the country.

In response, aging network has skillfully managed care for vulnerable aging populations by maximizing private and public resources to ensure that essential services are available to millions of minority, frail and low-income older persons in need of comprehensive long-term care. However, as the aging population grows — with more people living longer but facing chronic illness and frailty — and in the absence of significant funding increases, the aging network will increasingly be unable to meet the demands for care.

These challenges will only grow. Last year, the first of the 77 million baby boomers became eligible for OAA services. In 2030, one in five Americans will be over the age of 65. To make matters worse, the President's fiscal year 2008 budget proposal would cut Older Americans Act programs by a total of \$109 million, or 6 percent, at a time when funding should increase to meet the needs of a growing older population. Significant increases in authorization levels and appropriations are crucial to assure the availability of OAA services and enhance the ability of older Americans to live with maximum health, independence and dignity.

The Older Americans Act Fact Sheet is provided to you courtesy of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations. LCAO is a coalition of 54 national not-for-profit organizations concerned with the well-being of America's 87 million people over the age of 50. An advocacy leader since 1978, LCAO is committed to social justice and fiscal responsibility for an aging society.