



Leadership Council of Aging Organizations

William (Larry) Minnix, Jr., Chair

November 1, 2011

The Honorable Denny Rehberg
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor/HHS/Education
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor/HHS/Education
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor/HHS/Education
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor/HHS/Education
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leaders of the Committee and Subcommittee:

The undersigned members of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) thank you for your efforts to protect Older Americans Act (OAA) programs that help older Americans as they age at home and in the community. **We ask that you strengthen and support OAA programs as you move forward in the fiscal year 2012 appropriations process.**

LCAO is a 66-member coalition of diverse national nonprofit organizations dedicated to preserving and strengthening the well-being of older Americans. With a strong commitment to the needs of our older population and recognition of the challenging fiscal environment, the coalition provides leadership and vision as America meets the challenges and opportunities presented by its aging society.

As you know, the Older Americans Act is the backbone of the nation's long-term care system. OAA programs help older Americans maintain or improve their health, age with dignity and remain in their homes and communities through home-delivered and congregate meal programs, in-home services, health and wellness programs at senior centers, jobs and training, transportation, family caregiver support, information, referral and assistance, elder abuse prevention and ombudsman services, and more. Its programs reach every state and congressional district in our nation.

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LCAO understands the tremendous pressure you face to manage spending in this fiscal year. The recommendations you made for FY 2012 will not allow these programs to expand and reach the growing needs of an aging America. As advocates for the oldest, poorest, and most vulnerable in our society, we believe Congress can and should do better.

We urge you to approve a FY 2012 Labor/HHS/Education spending bill that includes the highest funding levels for Older Americans Act programs and services between the House and Senate bills.

Furthermore, we urge you to support any recommendation that improves the capacity of OAA programs:

- a. The Senate recommendation of \$10 million for the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program and \$7 million for Elder Falls Prevention Activities from the Prevention and Public Health Fund.
- b. LCAO appreciates the Senate's approach to moving the State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs) to the U.S. Administration on Aging and the recommended funding level of \$52 million.

We ask you to reject any proposal that reduces, eliminates or fails to provide funding for aging programs, such as:

- c. The House proposal to entirely eliminate Title IV Program Innovations.
- d. The reduction of funding for Title II Aging Network Support Activities.
- e. The House and Senate acquiescence to deny first-time funding for the Elder Justice Act at the Administration on Aging.
- f. The House proposal to amend the program cycle for the Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) by funding the program at \$450 million for 15 months—resulting in a 20% reduction in funding.

We hope you will make every effort in FY 2012 to prevent the erosion of—and invest in the future of—innovative and cost-effective Older Americans Act programs. Please do not hesitate to contact the LCAO, at e-mail LCAO@LeadingAge.org, or at (202) 783-2242. Thank you.

Sincerely,

AFSCME Retirees
Alliance for Retired Americans
Alzheimer's Foundation of America
American Society on Aging (ASA)
Association of Belltel Retirees, Inc.

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Association for Gerontology and Human Development in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (AGHDHBCU)
Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA)
Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc.
Easter Seals
Experience Works
The Gerontological Society of America (GSA)
The Jewish Federations of North America
LeadingAge
Lutheran Services in America (LSA)
Meals on Wheels Association of America (MOWAA)
Medicare Rights Center
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA)
National Alliance for Caregiving
National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA)
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers (NAPGCM)
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
National Association of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman (NASOP)
National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD)
National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc. (NCBA)
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare (NCPSSM)
The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care
National Council on Aging (NCOA)
National Osteoporosis Foundation (NOF)
National Senior Corps Association (NSCA)
OWL-The Voice of Midlife and Older Women
PHI - Quality Care through Quality Jobs
Services and Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Elders (SAGE)
Senior Service America, Inc. (SSA)
Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW)
Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER)