



Leadership Council of Aging Organizations

September 4, 2008

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chair
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on Finance
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member Grassley:

The undersigned members of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) are writing to express our sincere appreciation for your efforts earlier this summer to schedule a mark-up to advance S. 1070, the Elder Justice Act. Although that did not take place, we understand that you have scheduled a mark-up for September 10th to consider the Elder Justice Act and S.1577, the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act of 2007.

We are writing to express our support for the Elder Justice Act and the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act of 2007 and to urge you to mark-up this landmark legislation and move it to the Senate floor as soon as possible when the Senate returns from its state work period. With few legislative days remaining in the 110th Congress, it would be a tragedy to allow any more older Americans to suffer the pain of abuse, neglect, and exploitation because Congress failed to act.

The members of the LCAO will work with the House leadership and the appropriate committees to expedite action on consensus versions of companion legislation. We believe that favorable action on these bills by the committee would help speed passage of these important elder abuse prevention bills in the 110th Congress — six years after the EJA was introduced and more than 30 years after the first hearing on elder abuse.

Passage of this critical legislation would make a real difference to older adults in each and every state in the nation, and the undersigned members of LCAO stand ready to assist your efforts to pass it this fall. LCAO is a coalition of over 56 national not-for-profit organizations concerned with the well-being of American's 87 million people over age 50. With a strong commitment to social justice and fiscal responsibility, the coalition serves as a source of information about issues affecting older persons and provides leadership and vision as America meets the challenges and opportunities presented by its aging society.

We appreciate your consideration of our views, and we thank you for your leadership on elder abuse issues.

Sincerely,

*ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS
ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY, AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES
AFL-CIO
AMERICAN GERIATRICS SOCIETY
AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION RETIREES
AMERICAN SOCIETY ON AGING
B'NAI B'RITH
GREY PANTHERS
MEALS ON WHEELS ASSOCIATIONS OF AMERICA
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR HISPANIC ELDERLY
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF ELDER LAW ATTORNEYS
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NUTRITION AND AGING SERVICES PROGRAMS
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL GERIATRIC CARE MANAGERS
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAMS
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE UNITS ON AGING
NATIONAL CONSUMER VOICE FOR QUALITY LONG TERM CARE
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON AGING
OLDER WOMEN'S LEAGUE
UNITED JEWISH COMMUNITIES
VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA*