



Leadership Council
of Aging Organizations

Max Richtman, Chair

December 30, 2020

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President-Elect of the United States
1717 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear President-Elect Biden:

The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) congratulates you on your election to the Presidency.

Since 1980, LCAO has been the country's preeminent coalition representing older Americans. Composed of 69 national nonprofit organization members, LCAO focuses on the well-being of America's older population and is committed to representing their interests in the policy-making arena. LCAO 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.

As your presidential transition team moves forward, we urge you to consider our coalition's attached recommendations on health (including long-term services and supports), community services (including housing), and income security.

We offer these recommendations as potential solutions to the challenges your administration will face in the coming years. Although LCAO member organizations often have different perspectives on public policies, this statement represents the common ground among our organizations.

An unprecedented demographic shift is occurring as the baby boomer generation ages. [In 2018, there were 52 million people in the United States age 65 years or older, and every day another 10,000 people in the United States reach traditional retirement age. In contrast, by 2034, 77 million people — that is, one in five Americans — will be 65 or older.](#) Many older Americans face economic and health challenges. Currently, [approximately 85 percent of older adults have at least one chronic health condition, 4.7 million live in poverty and 5.3 million are food insecure.](#)

Furthermore, decades of stagnant wages and the erosion of employer-sponsored retirement benefits and savings are grinding away at the economic security of millions of older adults.

In addition to the challenges commonly associated with aging, older people have been the hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic. [According to the Centers for Disease](#)

[Control and Prevention, by November 6, 2020, approximately 569,000 to 616,000 COVID-19 diagnoses and 91,500 deaths were reported among residents and staff of long-term care facilities in the United States](#), accounting for six percent of total COVID-19 diagnoses and 42 percent of deaths.

Moreover, across settings, older adults of color, tribal and immigrant communities and their families are experiencing disproportionate illness and death from COVID-19. Although the attached statement addresses some pandemic-specific issues important to older Americans, LCAO will soon send to you a more detailed document focusing on our policy priorities to address COVID-19.

Programs and policies that support older adults strengthen our communities as a whole. LCAO would be most interested in meeting with you, your transition staff, and members of your administration to discuss the attached comprehensive statement on the concerns of older Americans and our recommendations for policies that address these concerns. We look forward to working together to help people of all ages thrive.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Max Richtman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chair