

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