



May 22, 2013

The Honorable Bernie Sanders, Chairman
Subcommittee on Primary Health & Aging
U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions
332 Dirksen Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Sanders:

On behalf of AARP, this letter is to commend your efforts to move forward with reauthorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA) in the 113th Congress so aging Americans can continue to access important services of the Act that expired in 2011. AARP believes the OAA has worked well and is not in need of major changes or additions, although room for improved administration and coordination of critical core services exists. Indeed, in this tight fiscal climate, AARP does not endorse major new initiatives or changes that will increase diversion of already inadequate resources for core OAA programs. It remains premature for AARP to endorse any bill at this time given our desire to support a bipartisan and bicameral approach that can prevail in both chambers, but we thank you for offering this package of meritorious ideas that many aging advocates have promoted as important to addressing the needs of a rapidly expanding older population.

AARP has engaged in conversations with appropriate OAA authorizing Committee Members in both the Senate and House of Representatives to urge expeditious action to reauthorize the core programs and services of the Act that help aging persons remain independent for as long as possible while living and engaging successfully in their communities with dignity. Significant differences remain among leaders in Congress regarding the best approach to OAA legislation that can successfully win passage, but your leadership in putting forward an agenda to ignite bipartisan and bicameral conversation is to be applauded. AARP is not opposed to many of the elements of your bill, but recognizes that the volume of new proposals and the associated costs raise concerns for a bicameral and bipartisan compromise, while putting at risk resources for core existing programs and services long underfunded but vital to seniors.

AARP appreciates the leadership, time and investment by you and your staff to assemble this legislative vehicle for the 113th Congress. We look forward to continuing to work with you in a very open dialogue among all interested parties, and we are optimistic it can evolve into a successful package that all vested parties can embrace.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Joyce A. Rogers'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joyce A. Rogers
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs