Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole,

Thank you for your ongoing support for programs that help older Americans live active and independent lives. As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 appropriations bill for the U.S. Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, we urge you to prioritize programs within the Administration for Community Living's (ACL) budget for the Administration on Aging (AoA). These programs under Title III of the Older Americans Act (OAA) help older Americans age successfully at home and in their communities. To more adequately address the needs of a rapidly growing aging and caregiving population, particularly as the Aging Network continues to face greatly increased demand for services as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we request a total funding level of $3.117 billion for OAA Title III programs in FY23.

For more than 50 years, OAA programs and services have advanced the health and well-being of older adults. These programs are administered by a nationwide Aging Network consisting of states, Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), Title VI Native American aging programs, and tens of thousands of local service providers. They provide millions of American seniors, many of whom are low-income, the services necessary to reduce hunger and isolation while maintaining their dignity, health, and independence. The services provided through the OAA enable seniors to live in their own homes while saving taxpayer dollars through reduced hospital and institutional care.

OAA Title III B Home and Community-Based Supportive Services (HCBS):

The Home and Community-Based Supportive Services program authorized in Title III B of the Older Americans Act (OAA) provides critical resources to states and local AAAs. Community-based agencies rely on these resources to offer an array of supportive services including transportation programs, information and referral/assistance services, case management, home modification and repair, chore services, legal services, emergency/disaster response efforts and other person-centered approaches to helping older adults age well at home. Overall, Title III B funding is used to deliver more than 20 distinctive services to help older adults and caregivers.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask that you appropriate $785 million for the HCBS program. Our communities are strengthened when older adults are able to live independently, and taxpayers and families avoid paying for more expensive acute health care and long-term care services.

OAA Title III C Congregate Nutrition Services and Home-Delivered Nutrition Services:

In 2019, prior to the pandemic, nearly 2.4 million economically and socially vulnerable seniors received more than 73 million nutritious meals via senior centers and other local community-based organizations, and almost 150 million meals delivered to their homes by public-private partnerships like Meals on Wheels. The number of older adults and meals served by the OAA Title III C Nutrition Program have remained at significantly increased levels since the onset of COVID-19. For most of these seniors, the meals provide about one-half or more of their food for the entire day. The Nutrition Program, however, offers more than just food and often provides participants their only opportunity for face-to-face contact or social connection in a time of increased isolation.

It is for these reasons that we respectfully request the subcommittee include $1.904 billion for OAA Title III C, which includes the Congregate and Home-Delivered Nutrition programs. These vital services authorized under the Older Americans Act help fulfill our nation's commitment to maintaining dignity and independent living regardless of income or location.

OAA Title III D Evidence-Based Health Promotion and Disease Prevention:

OAA Title III D programs deliver evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention through the Aging Network to prevent or better manage the conditions that most affect quality of life, drive up health care costs, and reduce the ability of older adults to live independently. Typical interventions promoted by III D programs address the risk of falls, chronic diseases, mental health, and medication management. We request that you fund OAA Title III D at $50 million to improve the health and independence of older Americans who benefit from these proven interventions.

OAA Title III E National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP):

The National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) offers a range of supports to the majority of the nation's 41.8 million caregivers who are caring for older adults and in need of help, including assistance in accessing services such as respite care, counseling, support groups, and caregiver training. Every year, caregivers provide nearly a half-trillion dollars' worth of unpaid care to older adults and people with disabilities. The NFCSP is the only nationwide program that provides essential supports, delivered through the Aging Network via state and local agencies, to informal caregivers of older adults who are an essential component to long-term care delivery in the country. We request that you fund OAA Title III E at $378 million.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and we look forward to working with you to make sure America's older adults receive the supportive services they need to live independently.

Sincerely,

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Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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