


## Talking Points for SE4A Legislative Priorities

### **CAPACITY OF THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT**

The Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging recommends that Congress restore and increase funding to the OAA to help Older Americans remain independent and successful in their homes and communities.

- **The Older Americans Act helps older adults live safely at home with choices. The OAA is the framework to ensure that the Aging Network can meet the needs of the current and future populations of older adults and their caregivers. The Aging Network is the Administration on Aging, 56 State Units on Aging, 622 AAAs, and over 20,000 funded partners who receive funding through the OAA and has been in existence for over 40 years! It is a strong and trusted infrastructure in every community in the country.**
  - The history of the Older Americans Act has proven it to be a dynamic piece of legislation which has evolved to meet the changing needs.
  - US Census Bureau, 2014 projections between 2015 and 2040 report the older adult population will increase by 72% in the next five years
  - The Act outlines the Aging Network and its roles and responsibilities
  - The Act provides the long standing long term community services and supports to enable older adults to remain in their home
- **To modernize the Act and achieve even greater effectiveness in our communities, the Aging Network needs:**
  - Local flexibility to maximize person centered approaches to services
  - Greater visibility of the Aging Network's growing role in health, wellness and care management
  - Increased authorization levels to effectively serve the increasing number of frail and vulnerable older adults
  - Enhanced capacity of the Aging Network infrastructure with investment in developing core competencies, evaluation, training and retention

 **The SE4A supports restoring the capacity of the Older Americans Act programs by increasing total funding to at least FY 2010 levels.**

### **Enhancing the Health of Older Adults**

The Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging recognizes the pivotal role that the Aging Network plays in bridging the gap between the health and long-term services and supports (LTSS) system to help increase patient safety, improve quality of care, and reduce health care costs.

- **A single entry point for services for consumers in need of LTSS is critical for success.**
  - Access to benefits is vital to one's independence and economic security.

- The Area Agencies on Aging have proven experience in providing information, counseling, case management, services integration and other assistance to older adults.
- **Access to benefits is vital to independence and economic security.**
  - Many seniors, although struggling, are not participating in programs for which they are eligible. This is from a lack of information, misinformation or an assumption that they are not eligible for assistance.
  - Coupled with the limited capacity of agencies with inadequate resources to seek and enroll eligible individuals, many older Americans are becoming economically vulnerable.

### **2017 Appropriations for Programs and Services for Older Adults**

The Southeastern Association of Area Agencies on Aging demand the restoration of funding to the Older Americans Act programs that have had no relief from sequestration.

- **Title IIIB Supportive Services**
  - Provides a wide range of needed supportive services to Older Americans
  - Sequestration funding cuts for Title IIIB have not been restored, local agencies fall farther behind each year in their ability to provide in-home services for the frail elderly, senior transportation, information and referral/assistance services, case management, home modification and other housing help, chore services, emergency/disaster response efforts targeted to older adults
- **Title IIIIE National Family Caregiver Support Program**
  - Assist informal and unpaid family members caring for older loved ones who are ill or who have disabilities
  - Need funding restored to 2010 levels
- **Title VI Native American Aging Programs**
  - Provides primary authority for funding services to elders in Indian country, who are the most economically disadvantaged elders in the nation
  - Sustained and steady increases in funding is necessary to even begin to address the large gaps in service capacity in Indian country
- **Title VII Long-Term Care Ombudsman**
  - Advocates for residents of long-term care facilities in order to resolve quality-of-life and care problems, including abuse, neglect and exploitation
  - The demand for Ombudsman services is growing
  - Funding MUST match the growth of seniors living in facilities to protect our most vulnerable seniors
- **The SE4A supports the Older Americans Act and increased funding for OAA Title IIIB Supportive Services, Title IIIIE National Family Caregiver Support Program, Title VI Grants for Native Americans, and Title VII Long-Term Care Ombudsman.**

Each item above agrees with our national association – n4a!