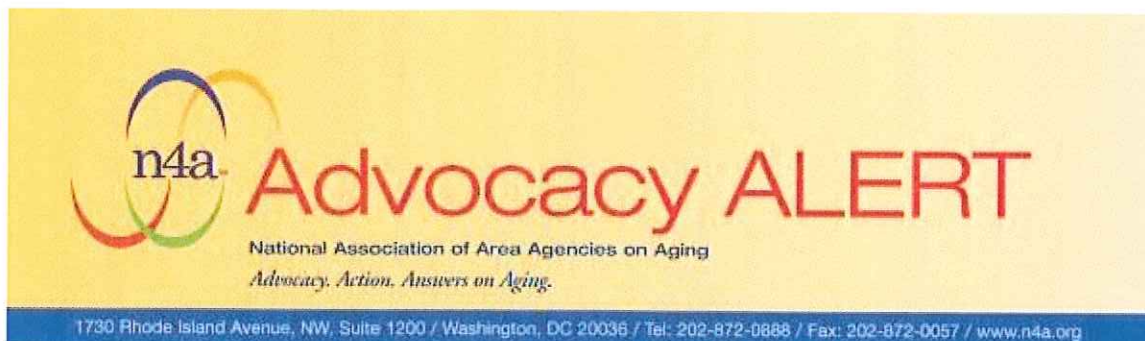


From: Amy Gotwals [agotwals@n4a.org]
Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2009 2:56 PM
To: laura@nysaaaa.org
Subject: Advocacy Alert: Call Upon Your Senators to Support OAA Programs



April 14, 2009

Call Upon Your Senators to Support OAA Programs that Help Seniors Stay Healthy and Independent

The House and Senate are still in recess until April 20, which means that legislators will be in their home states and likely making public appearances and seeking contact with constituents. In other words, it is a great time for aging advocates to push for increases in spending on Older Americans Act (OAA) programs!

The committees that govern such spending (appropriations) have not yet crafted bills to determine FY 2010 spending levels, but will do so in June and July. As you know from our previous [Advocacy Alerts](#), n4a championed the [Delahunt-Platts-Klein letter](#) in support of a 12 percent increase for OAA programs and services. Representatives had to submit their appropriations "wish lists" already, but the deadline for Senators to do the same is not until May 8.

With that in mind, we ask you to use this critical time to advocate for OAA with your Senators. Please take the simple action steps below and then share this *Advocacy Alert* with other aging advocates in your community and encourage them to take action, as well. Make sure your Senators know that OAA should be one of their funding priorities. A sample letter is included below. **You can also visit n4a's [OAA FY 2010 campaign website](#) for a host of other materials to aid your advocacy efforts!**

Action Steps to Take

1) Call the local offices of your Senators. To find contact information for their state/local offices, visit their websites, which you can find at: <http://www.senate.gov>. Introduce who you are and what agency you represent; mention how critical OAA is in your area; and then ask your Senators to support the highest possible OAA funding levels in this year's Labor-HHS-Education spending bill.

2) Customize the following letter on your agency's letterhead and send it to your Senators' DC office via fax or email (contact information can be found on their web site).

3) **Ask others to do the same!** Urge colleagues, advisory board members, volunteers and clients to make calls and send faxes/emails to both Senators serving your state. A steady drum beat of support for OAA funding will help get their attention.

4) **Start thinking about Older Americans Month in May** and how your local activities can also be advocacy opportunities by showcasing how OAA programs and services help older adults (e.g., invite lawmakers on a site visit; get local media to cover your events then send the clipping to your Members' offices; etc.—for more ideas, contact n4a.)

5) **Want extra credit?** If your Representative was one of the 29 House Members who signed the [Delahunt-Platts-Klein letter](#), please take a moment to send them a thank-you email or fax or give their DC office a quick call.

Sample Letter

Dear Senator [NAME]:

On behalf of the [specific number] older adults and caregivers that the [NAME OF AAA/Title VI program] reaches every year through a wide range of home and community-based services, I am writing to urge you to support Older Americans Act (OAA) programs under the FY 2010 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill.

As you may know, the Older Americans Act (OAA) is the backbone of the nation's long-term care system, providing older adults with much needed services that include [FILL IN INFORMATION ON YOUR PROGRAMS HERE]. Investing in this home and community-based care is far more cost effective, in economic and human terms, than paying for Medicare health care claims, Medicaid nursing home bills, or losing the economic and social contributions of older Americans. The cost of home and community-based care is estimated to be one-quarter of the cost of institutional care.

For years, OAA funding has not kept pace with inflation or the growing population eligible for services, yet demand by at-risk older adults in need of supportive services has risen and will only continue to rise with the growth in the aging population. [FILL IN INFORMATION ON LOCAL AGING STATISTICS HERE.]

[ADD LOCAL DATA HERE ABOUT WHAT YOU DO AND WHO YOU SERVE.] For example, include your statistics on older adults and caregivers served, mention any waiting lists for services, offer an example of how increased fuel costs have squeezed your budget and your services, etc.]

Please invest in OAA programs by increasing funding for these programs by at least 12 percent, or \$247.5 million, to allow them to keep pace with projected population growth and price increases in FY 2010, as well as taking modest steps toward addressing the years of funding erosion and the toll it has taken on service capacity.

[NAME OF AAA/Title VI program] appreciates your efforts to enhance funding for critical Older Americans Act programs in the midst of many other competing priorities.

For more information, please contact Amy E. Gotwals (agotwals@n4a.org) or K.J. Hertz (khertz@n4a.org), n4a's Public Policy and Legislative Affairs staff. 202.872.0888.

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)
1730 Rhode Island Avenue, NW
Suite 1200
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 872-0888
Fax: (202) 872-0057

To unsubscribe send email to webmaster@n4a.org