



June 9, 2014

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor-HHS-Education, and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor-HHS-Education, and Related Agencies  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Mikulski and Harkin and Ranking Members Shelby and Moran:

As you consider the FY 2015 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill, we write again to urge you to support Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Programs, like Meals on Wheels, by funding them at their FY 2010 level of \$819 million. We make this modest request knowing that providing proper nutrition to vulnerable seniors improves quality of life, promotes better health outcomes, and saves significant taxpayer dollars.

We are sincerely grateful for your leadership and past support for these programs, and remain hopeful that you will decide to invest in them further this fiscal year. Morally, investing in OAA Nutrition Programs is the right thing to do. Practically, it is good economics.

The nutritious meals, friendly visits, socialization and safety checks provided by our members' volunteers and staff enable more than 2.5 million seniors to remain healthier and independent in their own homes and communities. Congregate and home-delivered meal programs, which are supported through OAA funding, prevent taxpayers from having to pay for costlier care options. This includes nursing homes and hospitals, which are often paid for through Medicare and Medicaid. A recent study by the Center for Effective Government showed that for every \$1 invested in Meals on Wheels, there is up to \$50 in savings for the Medicaid program alone.

We understand the difficult decisions you and your colleagues are tasked with in FY 2015 and beyond. However, the evidence demonstrates that OAA Nutrition Programs are not only saving lives and taxpayer dollars every day, but they are effectively reaching our nation's most vulnerable seniors and have the capacity to serve more if properly resourced. In short, these proven and effective programs are a part of the solution to our nation's fiscal challenges and should be looked to as such.

As your Committee and Subcommittee considers the FY 2015 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill, we ask that you provide FY 2010 appropriations levels for all three nutrition programs authorized under the OAA – Congregate Nutrition Program, Home-Delivered Nutrition Program, and the Nutrition Services Incentive Program. You have the ability to shorten waiting lists and increase the number of nutritious meals we can serve to seniors today. At the same time you will be investing in a stronger fiscal path for our country by reducing future health care costs.

Thank you for your continued support and service to our country.

Sincerely,



Robert B. Blancato  
Executive Director  
National Association of Nutrition and  
Aging Services Programs (NANASP)



Ellie Hollander  
President and CEO  
Meals On Wheels Association of America

Contact Information:  
1612 K Street NW, Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20006  
202-682-6899  
[www.nanasp.org](http://www.nanasp.org)

Contact Information:  
413 North Lee Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
703-548-5558  
[www.mowaa.org](http://www.mowaa.org)