



Leadership Council
of Aging Organizations

Debra Whitman, Chair

April 2, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) is a coalition of 68 leading national nonprofit organizations working throughout the country to provide direct services to older adults, strengthen communities, and ensure the well-being of older adults and those caring for them. Since 1980, LCAO has worked with all Administrations and Congresses to help the United States meet the opportunities and challenges an increasing population of older people brings to our country.

The undersigned members of LCAO write to highlight the significant harms older adults will face under both the House and Senate versions of the FY 2025 budget resolutions currently working their way through the reconciliation process. The massive cuts in health coverage, food, rent, and other programs for low-income older adults required to meet the budget targets will tear families apart, worsen health outcomes, and increase isolation and the cost of care for older adults with chronic conditions, medical complexity, disabilities, and/or Alzheimer's Disease and related dementias. We urge you to support, not harm, older adults who are counting on you back home.

Both versions of the budget resolution set the stage for devastating cuts to Medicaid, including the health and long-term care that millions of older adults and their families

depend on. Thirty percent of Medicaid dollars support Medicare enrollees and one in five people with Medicare rely on Medicaid to meet their needs. Medicaid helps to make Medicare more affordable for older adults who qualify and fills in health care gaps for low-income older adults by covering services that Medicare does not cover, such as dental, vision, hearing, and non-emergency medical transportation, enabling individuals without other transportation options to keep medical appointments and avoid costly emergency room visits. Medicaid is the primary payer for more than 60% of nursing home residents, and Medicaid enables older adults to live independently in the community with home and community-based services (HCBS). Cuts to Medicaid funding will mean fewer staff, less training, and fewer resources to meet the health and long-term care needs of our growing aging population. Cuts to Medicaid funding or eligibility will lead to increased costs for older adults, states, and for the Medicare program itself, as decreased access to services results in worsened health outcomes. Cutting Medicaid will force states to make difficult choices - whether that means cutting provider payments, limiting eligibility, or reducing access to services that older Americans and their families rely on. These cuts will place greater strain on unpaid family caregivers, who provide essential support. Any cuts to Medicaid would negatively impact health care for older Americans, including access to and affordability of Medicare.

Both versions of the budget resolution also set the stage for large cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Roughly 6.5 million low-income adults age 60+ rely on SNAP to stay healthy and make ends meet, yet less than half of food-insecure older adults eligible for the program receive assistance. SNAP provides a modest but critical benefit to older adults, about \$5 per day on average, and is linked to decreased emergency room visits, decreased hospitalizations, and lower costs. Current SNAP benefit levels are already inadequate to stave off hunger and economic hardship, and proposals to reduce spending would halt access to lifesaving assistance, particularly for those in rural communities and those living alone. Cuts to SNAP and other critical nutrition programs will only worsen the health conditions and hunger of older adults and increase costs of care.

Despite historic restrictions on reconciliation changes to one of America's most cherished programs, Social Security, concerns remain that the recent reductions being imposed on the Social Security Administration will be amplified. Recently the agency has reduced staff, already at a 50-year low while the number of beneficiaries continues to increase. Field and hearing offices have closed or are slated to close in many communities, which are critical for older adults and disabled individuals to access benefits, especially considering that certain critical Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Medicare requests are required to be in person. These cuts are already leading to long wait times and delayed services for constituents across the country. Those who are eligible for Supplemental Security Income, a critical part of the Social Security system that provides modest financial assistance for older adults who do not have sufficient income and resources to meet their basic needs, will face the greatest difficulties interacting with the agency.

Both versions of the budget resolution call for additional cuts across programs that support and empower older adults and their families. These programs include homelessness prevention, home-delivered and community meals, transportation access, falls prevention, chronic disease management, resources on Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, support to long-term care ombudsman and adult protective services addressing maltreatment, and many more. We are further concerned about cuts to critical funding in the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) and the Prevention and Public Health Fund (PPHF). These programs are flexible by design to allow states to operate effectively and efficiently. Our constituent members have noted that cuts or elimination of these block grants would be devastating for many programs and result in fewer services. As noted, with fewer supports older adults are more likely to need a higher level of care at a higher cost. We urge you to support the innovative programs older adults and their families rely on.

Older adults have sacrificed through a lifetime of hard work and look to their leaders in Congress to ensure that services are available to them. There is a growing crisis of homelessness and hardship among older adults, underpinning the need for federal lifelines. We urge you to stand with older adults and reject any cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, SNAP, Social Security, SSI, SSBG, PPHF and other programs on which older adults rely.

Should you have any questions or need information about the harmful impact of these cuts, LCAO and its member organizations are available to provide resources.

Sincerely,

Aging Life Care Association
Alliance for Aging Research
Alliance for Retired Americans
American Association of Service Coordinators
American Foundation for the Blind
American Geriatrics Society
American Society on Aging
B'nai B'rith International
Caring Across Generations
Center for Medicare Advocacy
Community Catalyst
Compassion & Choices
Center for Workforce Inclusion (CWI Works)
Gerontological Society of America
International Association for Indigenous Aging
Justice in Aging
Leading Age
Meals on Wheels America
Medicare Rights Center
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

National Adult Day Services Association
National Adult Protective Services Association
National Alliance for Caregiving
National AmeriCorps Seniors Association
National Association of Geriatric Education
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs
National Association of Social Workers
National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care
National Council on Aging
National Indian Council on Aging, Inc.
Pension Rights Center
PHI
Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine Association
Service Employees International Union
USAging
Village to Village Network