

THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT AMENDMENTS OF 2013

In 1965, Congress enacted the Older Americans Act (OAA), the landmark law that provides federal funding and creates the infrastructure for the delivery of critical social services like meals, caregiver support, protection from elder abuse, and job training services to help seniors maintain independence in their homes and communities.

The Older Americans Act Amendments of 2013 strengthens the Act in five key ways:

- (1) STRENGTHENS AND REAUTHORIZES CORE PROGRAMS OF THE ACT:** Reauthorizes all programs through FY2018. Expresses nonbinding, sense of the Senate language that the amount appropriated should reflect a 12 percent increase from FY2010 levels to address the growing need and rapidly expanding senior population. Allows the Assistant Secretary to expand data collection and evaluation capacity for the Act's programs and services. Codifies the already existing National Adult Protective Services Resource Center, the National Resource Center for Women and Retirement, and the National Resource Center on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Aging.
- (2) UPDATES DEFINITIONS OF GREATEST ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL NEED:** Streamlines the targeting language and includes additional categories of older adults who may benefit from additional outreach, including veterans, LGBT individuals, Holocaust survivors, and those with Alzheimer's disease.
- (3) ADDRESSES ECONOMIC SECURITY:** Adds an increased focus on economic security among older adults throughout the Act, including a requirement that the Bureau of Labor Statistics create a more robust measure of the Experiential Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E).
- (4) AUTHORIZES NEW DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS:** Gives the Assistant Secretary the authority to fund new innovative programs under Title IV of the Act, including grants for: the modernization of multipurpose senior centers; new models of care coordination and advanced aide deployment; access to medically recommended dental care for low-income older adults; and creation of the National Resource Center on Family Caregiving.
- (5) PROTECTS SENIORS FROM ABUSE:** Adds language promoting federal, state, and local efforts for protection from elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation as consistent with the Elder Justice Act. Establishes an advisory committee to assess, coordinate, and improve legal assistance activities. Authorizes the State Home Care Ombudsman Program and grants to States; requires that States have a Home Care Consumer Bill of Rights and a Plan for Enforcement; and improves access to necessary information for long-term care ombudsman for the protection of residents' rights.