



washington UPDATE



Families First Coronavirus Response Act

March 2020

Last Wednesday, the Senate passed H.R. 6201, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, which was immediately signed into law by the President. This act contains \$250 million in emergency funding for Older Americans Act senior nutrition programs: \$160 million for home-delivered nutrition, \$80 million for congregate nutrition, and \$10 million for Title VI tribal nutrition programs.

As Congress continues to debate additional stimulus bills, we urge them to consider the following needs to ensure continued service delivery for older adults:

- Increased funding for Older Americans Act programs and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to meet increased demand for food, in-home services and caregiver support.
- Easier access to Medicaid home and community-based services so vulnerable older adults can get the care they need at home.
- Include emergency housing and homelessness resources to help address acute needs
- Help nonprofit charitable organizations maintain operations and meet rapidly growing demand by providing additional support.
- Charitable nonprofits of all sizes should be able to participate in the emergency Small Business Loan Program by using the tax-law definition of charitable organizations (Sec. 501(c)(3) public charities) and removing the language that excludes nonprofits that are eligible to receive Medicaid reimbursements.

Benjamin Rose Response to COVID-19

The Ohio Department of Health issued a Stay at Home Order on Sunday to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the state. Last week, Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging had temporarily closed our senior centers, adult day program and mental health day programs to help ensure the health and safety our clients and participants. Individuals receiving congregate meals in those locations are now receiving home-delivered meals, and other services are being delivered by telephone. We are updating our response to the COVID-19 pandemic on an almost-daily basis to continue providing vital services to our community. For updates, visit benrose.org/COVID-19.

Make a Gift

We need your help to protect and care for the most vulnerable people in our community—older adults, adults with disabilities and caregivers—during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Please make your gift today at benrose.org/donate.

Contact Us

We welcome your feedback!

Please share questions, suggestions or concerns.

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Older American's Act Reauthorization Agreement Passes Senate, House

Earlier this month, the Senate and House of Representatives both unanimously passed the Supporting Older Americans Act of 2020 (H.R. 4334), a bipartisan bill to reauthorize the Older Americans Act. This bipartisan, five-year reauthorization bill is supported by dozens of other aging organizations, including the members of the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations.

Important provisions of the bill include:

- Increased authorizations for funding levels. The bill includes an increase of over 35% over the next five federal fiscal years (FY) for every Older Americans Act program.
- An increased focus on social isolation. The bill also includes the first-time inclusion of social isolation screening, further coordination of services to address this issue, and a report on how the issue is currently addressed by aging programs.
- Providing support to caregivers. The bill extends the authorization of the RAISE Family Caregivers Act, which requires the development of a national strategy to recognize and support family caregivers. The bill also includes the use of caregiver assessments and eliminates the funding cap on the support older relative caregivers can receive under the National Family Caregiver Support Program.
- Establishing a National Research, Demonstration, and Evaluation Center for the aging network. The Center will be responsible for conducting, promoting, and coordinating research, including evaluation and demonstration projects, and related technical assistance throughout the Act.
- Adding new preventive health measures. The bill codifies the highly successful existing Falls Prevention and Chronic Disease Self-Management Education programs into the Act.