



The
John A. Hartford
Foundation



Age-Friendly Insights:

Americans Support Tax Dollars Being Spent on Community Programs for Older Adults

Survey shows bipartisan support for funding the Older Americans Act

First passed by Congress in 1965, the Older Americans Act (OAA) provides services like meal delivery, transportation, caregiver support and more to older adults across the United States by issuing grants funded by federal tax dollars to states and local social service organizations. One of its main goals is to help older adults age at home for as long as possible and delay expensive nursing home care.

One in six older adults relies on services supported through the OAA, which requires congressional authorization every five years. It was reauthorized by the Senate in July 2026 and is now awaiting final approval by the House. Traditionally, it has received strong bipartisan support.

The John A. Hartford Foundation (JAHF) commissioned a survey of more than 1,100 U.S. adults age 18+ to understand their views on supporting community programs for older adults and the OAA. Findings include:

State and local social service programs that help older adults with daily living enjoy strong support across the United States.

► **Programs funded by the OAA are supported by more than four in five U.S. adults.**

- 87% support meals offered to groups in places like senior centers and churches.
- 85% support meals delivered at home, like Meals on Wheels.
- 85% support transportation to medical appointments and other places in the community, like grocery stores.
- 83% support helping family caregivers who need time to take care of their own health needs.

“ Services covered by the Older Americans Act are essential to keeping older adults across America healthy, safe and engaged in their communities. Public support for the OAA remains strong and underscores the importance of reauthorization. ”

| **Rani E. Snyder, MPA**
| *President, JAHF*





► **Support for these programs is high regardless of age, race/ethnicity or where people live.**

- Support increases with survey respondents' age, but they're popular (more than 70% support) across all age groups.
- Support remains consistently high (above 80% support) regardless of where respondents live in America.
- Support was high and virtually the same across race and ethnicity.

People overwhelmingly believe the Older Americans Act should continue to be funded by the U.S. government.

► **Fully 84% of adults in America support continued funding of the OAA.**

► **Support is high across all political party affiliations.**

- 80% of Republicans support funding the OAA.
- 81% of Independents support funding the OAA.
- 94% of Democrats support funding the OAA.

People support using federal tax dollars on programs that help older adults age in their home, rather than in nursing homes.

► **Nearly four in five adults (79%) support using federal tax revenue to fund programs that help people age at home, in their community.**

Recognizing the physical and mental health benefits of older adults remaining active and engaged in their communities, adults support federal funding for related local programs.

► **Nearly seven in 10 adults (69%) support using federal taxes for programs that help keep older adults active and engaged.**

- Women support funding these state or community-based programs more than men (74% vs. 64%).

Using tax revenue to help prevent elder abuse, neglect and exploitation is supported by four in five adults.

► **Older people and women are more supportive of using federal taxes to fund these kinds of programs, compared to younger people and men.**

- Support ranges from 66% for those 18-29 to 88% among those 60+, but is a sizeable majority across all ages.