



The  
John A. Hartford  
Foundation

# Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act: What's at Stake



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Programs



Leaders in Aging Well at Home

## **Older Americans Act 101**

**Amy Gotwals, Chief of Public Policy and External Affairs**

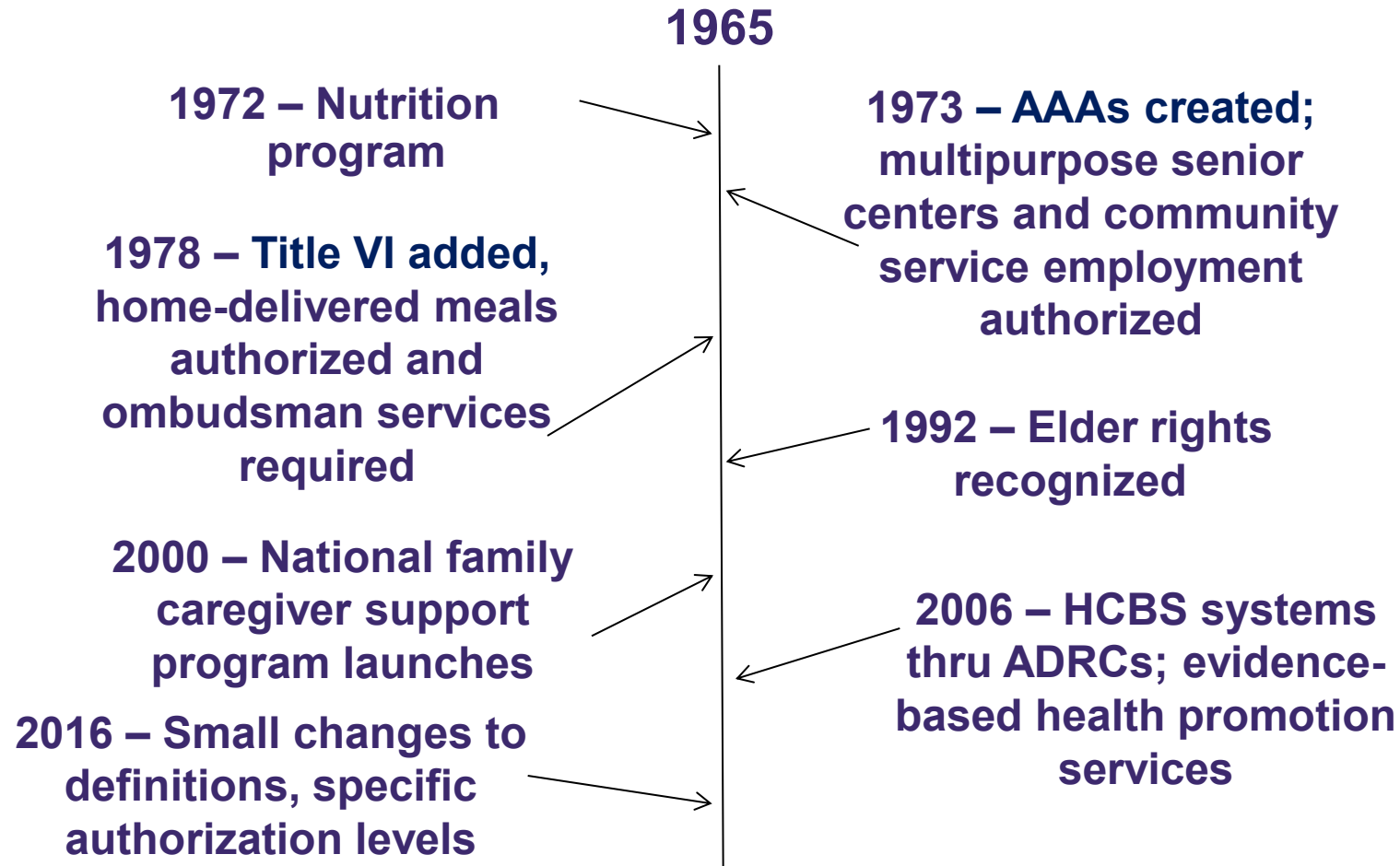
**September 2025**

# Older Americans Act of 1965, P.L. 89-73



Lyndon Johnson signing the OAA, July 14, 1965.

# Timeline of Major Amendments to OAA



**March 2020, P.L. 116-131**

**Increases in authorization levels, emphasis on social isolation, clarification of AAA activities outside OAA**

# Core Services, Local Flexibility



Nutrition



Supportive  
Services



Caregivers



Health &  
Wellness



Elder Rights

# Older Americans Act

- Seven titles in the Act, added over time, reauthorizations every 3-5 years
- **Title II** established the U.S. Administration on Aging
- **Title III (Grants for State and Community Programs)** is largest section of OAA and funds the bulk of services, including:
  - III B Supportive Services and Senior Centers: catch-all, flexible, 25 purposes!
  - III C Nutrition: most well-known, congregate meals (C1) and home-delivered (C2)
  - III D: Evidence-Based Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
  - III E: National Family Caregiver Support Program

# OAA Title III B: Supportive Services...

- In-home help with living!
- Transportation
- Chore services
- Home modifications
- Social engagement activities
- Senior centers
- Legal services
- Adult day services
- Any other necessary services




# OAA Title III B: Information, Referral & Assistance




- Local hotlines to connect callers to HCBS and related services
- Case management for HCBS
- Benefits and eligibility counselors
- Health insurance benefits counselors
- Care transitions coaches
- Identification and prevention of elder abuse

# Eldercare Locator National Call Center

Connecting Older Adults  
and Their Caregivers  
to Local Resources



eldercare  
locator



1 (800) 677-1116 • [www.eldercare.acl.gov](http://www.eldercare.acl.gov)

**800.877.1116**

Monday-Friday,  
9:00 am ET to 8:00 pm ET

**[eldercare.acl.gov](http://eldercare.acl.gov)**

# OAA Title III: There's So Much More!

- **C: Nutrition Services**
  - Home-Delivered Meals
  - Congregate Meals
  - Nutrition Services Incentive Program
- **E: National Family Caregiver Support Program**
  - Respite
  - Support and navigation help
  - Caregiver training
- **D: Evidence-Based Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Services**
  - Wellness and socialization programming at local senior/community centers
  - Chronic Disease Self-Management programs
  - Falls Prevention programs



# Older Americans Act



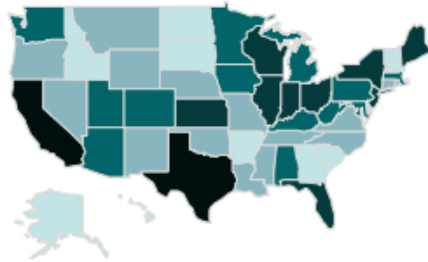
Photo courtesy of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe

- **Title V Senior Community Service Employment Program** is a low-income community service/employment program run by Dept. of Labor
- **Title VI: Native American Aging Programs**, provides competitive grants to tribes for supportive services and meals (Part A), caregiver program (Part C)
- **Title VII: Elder Rights** provides funding for Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, elder abuse prevention, and some legal services



# The Value of Aging Well: The Older Americans Act Creates Real Returns Through Community-Based Care

The Older Americans Act funds essential services allowing older adults to remain independent and thrive in their communities, thereby saving taxpayers billions of dollars in institutional care costs. Without these programs, one in five American seniors would face food insecurity, isolation, and premature placement in nursing homes. This infographic captures the impact, backed by data from SPR 2024.



**13,768,289**

Clients served

**\$ 4,392,037,300**

Funds expended

**296,856,119**

Services Delivered

**23.3%**

of the U.S. population is over age 60

# of Clients Served



## Nutrition

**240,477,146 meals provided**

For many older adults, the meal they receive is the only meal they can rely on each day



## Transportation

**14,681,369 trips completed**

Allowing older adults to attend medical appointments, shop for groceries, visit family, and participate in community events



## Information & Referral

**9,746,42 contacts made**

Connecting older adults to preventive support resources, timely referrals, and life-saving programs



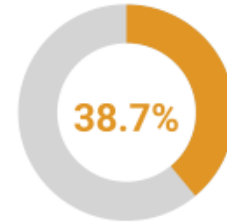
## Personal Care

**10,798,884 hours of personal care**

Helping older adults with everyday tasks, such as bathing and dressing, to ensure their safety and dignity at home

# Estimated ROI of Aging Services

Every dollar invested in aging services through the Older Americans Act generates \$3.39 in community value and taxpayer savings

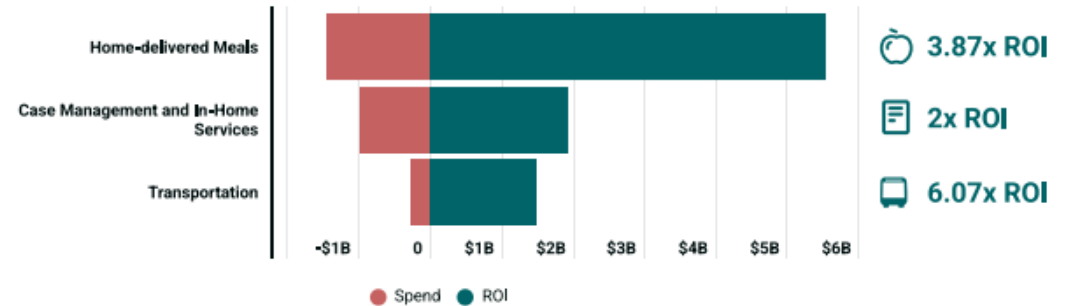


**38.7%**

of clients served are at or below the poverty level

**3.39x ROI**

<sup>(1)</sup> With **\$2,629,085,364** in spending on key home and community-based services, Older Americans Act Programs achieved an estimated **\$8,923,610,114** in cost savings by reducing the need for institutional care



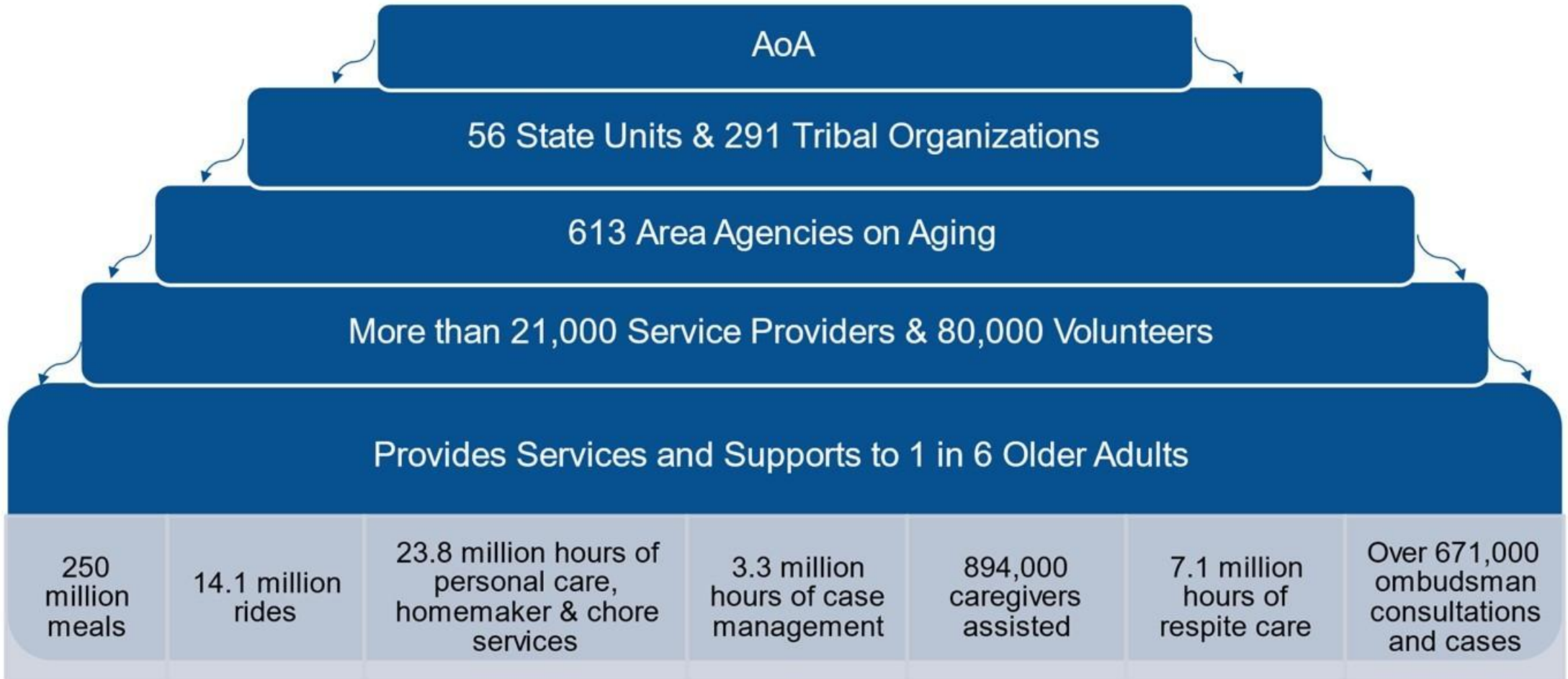
**1,921,379 Extra Days** <sup>(2)</sup>

living in community and avoiding hospital stays and institutional care



# OAA: the Aging Network

- The Older Americans Act, administered by the Administration on Aging (AoA), helps over 14.6 Million older adults (1 in 6) remain at home through Low-Cost, Community-Based Services



Bob Blancato

Executive Director, NANASP

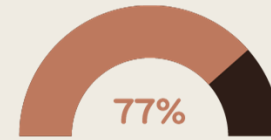
# OAA's Largest Program is Title III-C Nutrition Services Program

**Congregate Meals · Home Delivered Meals · Nutrition Services Incentives Program**

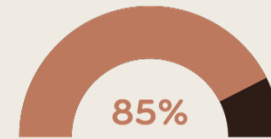
 <p>Target older adults (60+) who are in greatest need</p>	 <p>Serve family members and caregivers in some cases</p>	 <p>Include healthy home-delivered meals and meals served in group settings</p>	 <p>Offer nutrition screening, assessment, education, and counseling</p>	 <p>Connect participants with home and community-based supports</p>	 <p>Serves 2.4 million older adults 240 million meals</p>
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# OAA's Nutrition Program is a Smart Investment

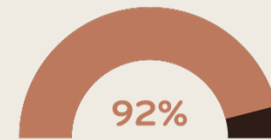
- Differs from SNAP by providing nutritious prepared meals, socialization, and other services
- All adults 60+ are eligible, but targets those in greatest need, especially low-income, food insecure, and rural communities
- Has a 4:1 return on federal investment
- Program was rewarded during pandemic with doubling of funding



say the meals help  
**IMPROVE THEIR HEALTH**



say the services help them  
**FEEL MORE SECURE**



say the meals help them  
**LIVE INDEPENDENTLY**

# Title VI Native American Nutrition Services

Serves  
100,000  
Tribal elders

Serves  
2.8 million  
meals



Tribal elders receiving OAA meals and services reported

- **36% fewer hospital visits**
- **10% fewer falls per year\***
- **35% more social activities per month\***

Elders served by programs with higher number of services reported

- **53% fewer hospitalization**
- **45% percent fewer falls per year\***

# Title VII Vulnerable Elder Rights Protection

- Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP)
  - Advocates for older adults in nursing homes and other LTC facilities
  - Received nearly 183,000 complaints and resolved 75% (FY2022)
  - Volunteers provided over 231,447 hours of assistance
- Elder Abuse Prevention Programs
  - Includes grants to Adult Protective Services, who receive nearly 1.4 million reports of adult maltreatment in the community
  - Leverages \$9 non-OAA funds for every \$1 of OAA funding
- Elder Rights and Legal Assistance Development
  - National Center on Law & Elder Rights - 24 webinar trainings per year, viewed by over 40,000 including 1,300 law and aging network professionals
- Includes Tribal Elder Justice

# Very Appropriate Title: OAA Reauthorization - What's at Stake

- Answer is a lot
- First a look at modern history
- 2024:
  - OAA was due to be reauthorized and came very close
  - Senate produced a bipartisan, forward looking, 4-year renewal that included input from advocates
  - Senate and House came to an agreement
  - House failed to act before the clock ran out
  - One consequence: not being renewed allowed it to be a key part of the HHS reorganization announced earlier this year

# Actions in 2025

- HHS reorganization announced, ultimately transfers OAA programs from the existing Administration for Community Living to a new agency named Administration for Children, Families, and Communities (ACFC)
- Among the choices, this was the best
- Five organizations came together to advocate for what's best for OAA programs: USAging, Advancing States, National Council on Aging, NANASP, and Meals on Wheels America

# We Celebrated OAA's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



# Senate Reintroduced

## S.2120 – OAA Reauthorization Act of 2025

Sen. Cassidy [R-LA]    Sen. Gillibrand [D-NY]    Sen. Sanders, [I-VT]  
Sen. Kaine [D-VA]    Sen. Rick Scott [R-FL]    Sen. Collins [R-ME]  
Sen. Mullin [R-OK]    Sen. Markey. [D-MA]    Sen. Murkowski [R-AK]  
Sen. Luján [D-NM]

- Extends the OAA until 2030
- Increases authorizations for most programs over the life of the bill
- Maintains some key nutrition flexibilities like grab-and-go meals
- Includes a focus on Medically Tailored Meals
- Clarifies how AAAs can provide OAA and non-OAA programs
- Adds elder abuse training to the National Family Caregiver Support Program
- Elevates LTCOP director to full-time; reduces unnecessary trainings for LTCOP volunteers

# How 2025 Changes the Reauthorization

- So what's at stake? How will this new arrangement impact the OAA reauthorization or the other way around?
- Nexus of nutrition and health recognized more now with MAHA than at anytime in the OAA nutrition program history
- Two places: MAHA and Medicare reimbursement codes

# Scenarios for 2025 on OAA

- And best way to describe House so far is that they are planning to introduce, we are waiting to see what the bill looks like
- Next steps could be hearings in Senate HELP Committee & House Ed and Workforce Committee
- If House follows Senate bill– faster path to passage and two possibilities
  - Separate bill passage in Senate and House by unanimous consent (Senate) and under suspension (House)
  - Or move it into end of year package
- If a different bill– complicates a great deal
- Administration weighing in would impact (they haven't yet)
- Sept. is pivotal on seeing movement, the House must make a move led by Education and Workforce Chair Tim Walberg

# Action is Needed

- 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary for a program which has succeeded in every way measurable
- It has value both to older adults and their families
- Value to the federal government through savings to Medicare and Medicaid
- Advocates have a great story to tell; the OAA is easy to localize and humanize
- Best-known OAA programs make the case:
  - Meals on Wheels should be included any message
  - Supporting caregivers and elder abuse prevention
  - With 613 Area Agencies on Aging, likely one in every Congressional district
- It is time

**Thank you for attending.**

**A recording of today's briefing and links to resources will be emailed to attendees and posted on JAHF's website:  
[johnahartford.org](http://johnahartford.org)**

