



Message to NYS Congressional Delegation

Sequestration is already having a negative impact on older New Yorkers. The latest numbers released March 8 show \$2.2 million fewer dollars for New York's Area Agencies on Aging and their community-based programs. Older Americans Act (OAA) cuts vary from state to state and also vary by title. Since the cuts to OAA are concentrated in the remaining six months of the federal fiscal year, the real impact on services will double before year's end. The result will be fewer older adults receiving nutritious home delivered meals, less support services for caregivers and reduced preventive health.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) design, fund, and coordinate programs that enhance the community support system designed to maintain older adults in their homes, postponing the need for more medically intensive and costly health care services. The OAA federal funding represents a third of overall funding in New York State, a critical piece of the service delivery system.

Top 5 Ways the Sequester puts the squeeze on older Americans

- 1. Medicaid costs will increase.** It will cost taxpayers more when long term services and supports have to be cut and older New Yorkers end up having to spend down to Medicaid, which is more expensive for taxpayers and restricts the discretionary dollars available at local, state and federal levels.
- 2. Waiting lists for services will be even longer.** Already, Area Agencies on Aging in New York State have waiting lists for services. Washington County, for instance, has more people on its waiting list for its Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly program (72) than they serve (69). Cuts will only create longer waiting lists.
- 3. Fewer older New Yorkers will be able to live independently.** There are two reasons why more is better when it comes to older New Yorkers living independently: Seniors prefer to live independently and nursing home care is more expensive than AAA services.
- 4. The current aging services infrastructure will be further compromised.** When revenue is lost, the infrastructure of people and programs is jeopardized. The Aging Network is already lean and operating on a shoestring; further reductions will endanger the fabric of the Aging Services Network. Offices for the Aging and local provider organizations reached 562,151 older New Yorkers last year. Don't short change them this year!
- 5. It's not a sustainable solution.** Americans deserve a balanced solution to the federal deficit that continues to provide support for its oldest most vulnerable citizens. Any "savings" from the sequester would pale in comparison to premature nursing home placement for seniors who can no longer remain in their homes and communities contributing to New York State's economy.