



May 20, 2013

The Honorable Bernard Sanders  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging  
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions  
648 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Sanders:

On behalf of the National Council on Aging, I am pleased to share NCOA's endorsement of the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2013 and commend you for this important first step to spur a bipartisan, bicameral reauthorization process for the 113th Congress.

We appreciate your continued leadership to advance a very thoughtful reauthorization package that continues to recognize that the Act still provides a strong foundation for the Aging Services Network and its partners to empower older adults to retain or improve their health and economic independence so they can remain in their own homes and communities. The most significant reason why the Act has not yet fully realized its true potential has been a lack of investment, which your bill addresses through several Sense of the Senate statements.

Reauthorization of the OAA as increasing waves of Baby Boomers turn 65 is crucial to ensure that successes of the Act can be better leveraged, and innovation continues to be fostered to meet the needs of today's seniors. Proposals in your legislation that seize this opportunity include those which define economic security and significantly establish it as a goal of the Act, emphasize the delivery of evidence-based chronic disease self-management and falls prevention, promote senior center modernization, enhance the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), and strengthen legal assistance and other elder justice provisions. Together, these improvements can empower seniors and improve their health and economic security, bend downward the long-term entitlements cost curve, and promote greater program efficiency and coordination.

We applaud your ongoing efforts to move OAA reauthorization forward, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to promote a bipartisan process that remains true to the history of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James P. Firman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

James P. Firman, Ed.D.  
President & CEO