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September 27, 2019

Speaker Pelosi
U.S. House of
Representatives

Minority Leader McCarthy
U.S. House of
Representatives

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of ADvancing States, I am writing you in support of efforts to reauthorize the Older Americans Act (OAA). ADvancing States (formerly the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities, or NASUAD) is a nonpartisan association of state government agencies and represents the nation's 56 state and territorial agencies on aging and disabilities. We work to support visionary state leadership, the advancement of state systems innovation, and the development of national policies that support home and community-based services for older adults and persons with disabilities. Our members administer a wide range of services and supports for older adults and people with disabilities, including OAA programs and services. Together with our members, we work to design, improve, and sustain state systems delivering long-term services and supports for people who are older or have a disability and for their caregivers.

On September 16, 2019, the House Education & Labor Committee introduced H.R. 4334, the *Dignity in Aging Act of 2019*, which would authorize the OAA for an additional five years. We were very pleased to see that the bill proposes significant increases in authorized funding levels as well as a number of important technical revisions and program changes. Specifically, we were especially pleased to see the change to Section 202, that would raise the minimum funding level for state administrative expenses from its current level, \$500,000, to \$750,000. This is an important change that will benefit at least 24 states.

Overall, our membership of state agencies is very supportive of H.R. 4334 and encourages the full U.S. House of Representatives to pass the bill, as reported by the Committee, with one technical change. Our membership is extremely concerned with the proposed changes contained within Section 301 of the bill that include an expansion of the Maintenance of Effort requirements for the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program to include funds from all sources rather than those strictly from Title VII of the Act. This proposed change would unnecessarily limit state flexibility to manage resources both within and across the Act and is not an acceptable way to manage the state-federal partnership.

We appreciate the bipartisan efforts that have been made to reauthorize the OAA, and strongly encourage the full U.S. House of Representatives to pass H.R. 4334 after amending Section 301.



We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on this key piece of legislation. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact Damon Terzaghi at dterzaghi@advancingstates.org or Adam Mosey at amosey@advancingstates.org or 202-898-2578

Sincerely,

Martha Roherty
Executive Director
ADvancing States

Cc: Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Foxx, and Members of the Education & Labor Committee