



President
Barbara J. Easterling

Secretary-Treasurer
Ruben Burks

December 15, 2011

The Honorable Bernard Sanders, Chairman
Retirement and Aging Subcommittee
Health, Education, Labor and Pension Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Sanders:

On behalf of our four million members, the Alliance for Retired Americans writes to thank you for introducing the *Older Americans Act Amendments of 2011*. This legislation is vital to the health and economic security of millions of older Americans and their families.

The Older Americans Act (OAA) helps seniors to stay independent, healthy and productive through a wide range of services and programs, such as meals, job training, preventive health measures, senior centers and the ombudsman program. For years, OAA funding has not kept pace with inflation or the growing population of individuals eligible for services, yet demand by at-risk older adults in need of supportive services has risen and will only continue to rise with the growth in the aging population. Your legislation, with enhanced funding for these critical programs, will significantly address the shortfall and ensure that these programs continue to serve older Americans and their families.

In addition to supporting the many provisions that will strengthen funding for critical OAA programs, we are especially supportive of the legislation's provision calling for the revision and improvement of the experimental price index for the elderly (CPI-E). As you know, the current formula used to calculate the Social Security annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) does not accurately reflect the everyday costs that older Americans face. Revising the CPI-E so that it may replace the current formula used to measure the Social Security COLA is an improvement that will help our members better meet the mounting financial challenges they face.

Your introduction of the *Older Americans Act Amendments of 2011* demonstrates your commitment to the quality of life for retirees and older Americans. Should you have any questions, please contact Richard Fiesta or Sarah Byrne at the Alliance Department of Government and Political Affairs.

Sincerely yours,

Barbara J. Easterling
President

Ruben Burks
Secretary-Treasurer

Edward F. Coyle
Executive Director

