



September 2019

## Older Americans Act Reauthorization Passes House Committee

On September 18, the House Education and Labor Committee passed H.R. 4334, the bipartisan Dignity in Aging Act, which is the House version of the Older Americans Act reauthorization. Though the bill is a fairly basic reauthorization, it does contain some important provisions, including:

- A 35% increase in total funding authorizations over the life of the bill.
- A new Interagency Coordinating Committee on Age Friendly Communities tasked with coordinating efforts to promote safe and accessible independent living environments
- Greater support for family caregivers, including the use of caregiver assessments and the removal of the cap on older relative caregiver support funding
- Greater focus on social isolation by empowering local organizations to evaluate solutions for social isolation and incorporating social isolation screening into health and supportive services
- Addition of Falls Prevention and Chronic Disease Self-Management Programs to the Act

Next, the bill will move to consideration by the full House of Representatives. Early indications are that the bill will pass the House because it has been a bipartisan process from the beginning.

The Senate still only has released a “discussion draft” but has not actually introduced a bill. Since Congress has recessed, the Act expired September 30, 2019. However, the programs will continue while reauthorization progresses.

**Please contact your representatives during the recess** to encourage them to pass the Dignity in Aging Act. You can find your representative at [house.gov](https://www.house.gov). Information on the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, which would move forward legislation in the Senate, can be found at [help.senate.gov](https://www.help.senate.gov).

## Contact Us

We welcome your feedback!

Please share questions, suggestions or concerns.

Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging  
11890 Fairhill Road,  
Cleveland, OH 44120

216.791.8000 | [info@benrose.org](mailto:info@benrose.org)

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## Senate and House Pass Continuing Resolution, Avoiding Shutdown

The Senate and House passed a continuing resolution last Thursday that guarantees funding at last year's levels for all programs, including Older Americans Act programs, through November 21, 2019, averting a government shutdown for now. Congress will be at home in their districts and states until October 15.

When Congress comes back into session, Members must agree on appropriations levels for FY 2020 before November 21. The House has already passed their Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill for FY 2020 which would increase funding for Older Americans Act programs by about \$150 million. The Senate has not yet acted on their version of the bill. A draft version of the Senate bill would fund all Older Americans Act programs at current levels.