The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and Older Adults: Opportunities and Resources for Local Leaders

At AARP, part of our mission is to make sure that the most important issues facing Americans age 50 and older get the attention — and action — they deserve from local, state, and federal leaders. Since March 2020, that’s meant a top priority for AARP teams in communities in all 50 states, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands has been protecting those most at risk from COVID-19.

The pandemic hit older adults incredibly hard and put a spotlight on a host of disparities that persist across the country — from access to health care, nutrition, affordable housing, accessible transportation options, safe places to enjoy the outdoors, and more. We’ve also seen how communities can come together to help residents of all ages stay safe and healthy.

As our nation looks to recover from the pandemic, local leaders across the country are making decisions about how to invest federal funding authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) that passed Congress in March 2021.

The funding in ARPA represents an incredible opportunity to strengthen counties, cities, and towns with an eye toward the future, while also doing more to support those who were hardest hit by the pandemic.

AARP is committed to working hand-in-hand with local officials and community leaders to help leverage these investments to address pressing needs and strengthen communities for the future.

AARP staff and volunteer teams on the ground can be a partner and an ally as local leaders seek to engage residents, identify best practices, and shape policies so they carry benefit for all.

This resource is intended to serve as a conversation starter and help leaders identify opportunities under ARPA.

Our hope is that you’ll use the information and guidance provided and then reach out to your AARP State Office at AARP.org/States or email us at livable@AARP.org to tell us the challenges you’re facing and what would be helpful.

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