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July 13, 2017

The Honorable Diane Black
Chairman, Committee on the Budget
United States House of Representatives
207 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6065

Dear Chairman Black:

On behalf of AARP's 38 million plus members and other Americans who are age 50 and older, I am writing to communicate our views as you prepare to consider a House Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2018. It is widely reported that the House budget may include \$200 billion in proposed reductions to mandatory spending. AARP urges the Budget Committee to reject mandatory cuts that would have a devastating impact on older Americans.

Medicare and Social Security

Our members count on these programs and they believe Social Security and Medicare must be protected and strengthened for today's seniors and future generations. Unfortunately, there have been many proposals to change the Medicare program and undermine the contract made with generations of Americans. Proposals creating a defined contribution premium-support program; restricting access by raising the age of eligibility; or allowing hospitals and providers to arbitrarily charge consumers higher prices than Medicare; all betray the promise made to older Americans who have paid into Medicare their entire working lives. Indeed, these proposals do little to actually lower the cost of health care. Rather, they simply shift costs from Medicare onto individuals – many of whom cannot afford to pay more for their care. We urge you not to include attempts to cut the Medicare program in the upcoming budget proposal.

The typical senior, with an annual income of under \$25,000 and already spending one out of every six dollars on health care, counts on Social Security for the majority of their income, and on Medicare for access to affordable health coverage. We will continue to oppose changes to current law that cut benefits, increase costs, or reduce the ability of

these critical programs to deliver on their benefit promises. We urge you to continue to do so as well.

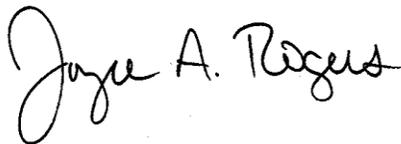
Medicaid, Long-Term Services and Supports and SNAP

Medicaid serves as a critical safety net for millions of people in every state, including over 17 million children with disabilities, adults with disabilities and poor elderly who rely on vital Medicaid health and long-term care services. Efforts to reduce or cap Medicaid funding could endanger the health, safety, and care of millions of individuals who depend on the essential services provided through this program. Furthermore, caps could result in overwhelming cost-shifts to state governments unable to shoulder the costs of care without sufficient federal support. As we have detailed in our communications to Congress regarding the American Health Care Act and Better Care Reconciliation Act, we are opposed to capping Medicaid funding and urge you to do the same. Instead, Medicaid proposals should focus on efforts to encourage more individuals to receive services in their homes and communities rather than costly institutional care.

SNAP plays a vital role in feeding millions of hungry Americans, including over four million older Americans. Proposals to block grant the program, or impose work requirements, will make SNAP less responsive and accessible in times of need; and without clear work requirement exemptions for the elderly and disabled, would bar these individuals from receiving SNAP benefits.

We look forward to working with you to protect Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and SNAP. We strongly urge you to enact a budget that will better protect these vital programs that tens of millions of Americans depend upon for their health and financial security. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, or have your staff contact Cristina Martin Firvida, Director of Federal Financial Security and Consumer Affairs, Government Affairs at (202) 434-3750.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joyce A. Rogers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joyce A. Rogers
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs

cc: Members of the Committee on the Budget