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February 4, 2020

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
Chairman  
Committee on Health, Education, Labor  
& Pensions  
U.S. Senate  
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Health, Education, Labor  
& Pensions  
U.S. Senate  
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bobby Scott  
Chairman  
Committee on Education & Labor  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2176 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Virginia Foxx  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Education & Labor  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2176 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Alexander and Scott and Ranking Members Murray and Foxx:

On behalf of our nearly 38 million members and all older Americans nationwide, I am writing to express AARP's support for the Supporting Older Americans Act of 2020, a bipartisan amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 4334 that would reauthorize the Older Americans Act (OAA). We are pleased that this amendment maintains critical service and information roles of OAA programs, and promotes greater responsiveness to the needs of older Americans. We appreciate your leadership in developing this bipartisan, bicameral agreement and look forward to a prompt reauthorization of OAA.

Giving Americans the support they need to live at home with independence and dignity has always been a bedrock goal of OAA, and it has been remarkably successful. The Supporting Older Americans Act builds on this success by further enhancing OAA programs and services. This amendment addresses AARP's OAA reauthorization priorities, including further strengthening the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP), extending the bipartisan Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act (P.L. 115-119), and increasing funding levels for OAA programs.

The Supporting Older Americans Act enhances support for caregivers by encouraging the use of caregiver assessments under NFCSP. Assessing the caregiving situation can lead to targeting services more effectively by linking the caregiver to the services most beneficial to them. Better targeting of support services can also help maintain the health and well-being of the caregiver, sustain their ability to provide care, produce better outcomes for their loved ones, and prevent or delay nursing home placement. The provision to extend RAISE will provide the RAISE Family Caregiving Advisory Council with more time to identify meaningful solutions for supporting the 41 million family caregivers nationwide who provide a staggering \$470 billion annually in unpaid care to their loved ones. And importantly, at a time when the older population is projected to grow significantly, the increased funding levels provided in the amendment would assist more older Americans and caregivers, thus helping more older adults remain at home and in better health, avoiding costlier services.

We commend the committees for their bipartisan and bicameral work, and urge prompt reauthorization of the Older Americans Act to ensure that our loved ones can continue to turn to these vital services for their health and economic security as they age. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or have your staff contact Nicole Burda on our Government Affairs team at [nburda@aarp.org](mailto:nburda@aarp.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Megan O'Reilly', written in a cursive style.

Megan O'Reilly  
Vice President, Federal Health & Family  
Government Affairs