



NDD Sequestration Hurts Vulnerable Seniors

If Congress allows sequestration to go into effect on January 2, 2013, the resulting \$54.5 billion in non-defense discretionary (NDD) cuts in FY 2013 will have devastating effects on programs that maintain older adults' independence, health and well-being. This would avoid making actual choices about which federal discretionary programs provide the greatest return-on-investment and reflect the current and future needs of our country.

Any "savings" from the sequester would pale in comparison to the added costs, resulting in premature nursing home placement for seniors who can no longer stay in their homes and communities because of reduced federal funding. Such cuts would also place greater financial strains on family caregivers and drive higher medical costs due to elders' poorer nutrition and health, increased falls, and other avoidable crises. There will be indirect economic harms from the sequester as well: fewer meals served means smaller purchases from local farmers, grocers and food vendors, fewer in-home service hours restricts the senior's life and the worker's pay, and stranded-at-home seniors spend fewer dollars in their community.

The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) has calculated just some of the direct effects that approximately 8 percent sequestration would have on the millions of low-income or vulnerable older adults.

Home and Community-Based Services

Older Americans Act (OAA) Title III C Senior Nutrition Services provides grants to States to support **congregate and home-delivered meals** to seniors in need. These meals help seniors remain healthy and independent in their communities, thus reducing the risk of disability and the need for more costly medical interventions. It's estimated that 17 million meals will be lost to sequestration.

OAA Title III B Supportive Services provides flexible funding to state and local agencies to provide a wide range of supportive services to older Americans. Under sequestration, approximately:

- 1.9 million **senior transportation** rides to medical appointments, grocery shopping and other primary needs will be lost.
- 290,000 older adults will no longer receive the **case management** that coordinates care essential to remaining at home.
- 1.2 million older adults will lose access to the **homemaker services** that help them with basic daily housekeeping needs such as cooking or laundry.
- Another 1.5 million people will lose **personal care services** such as in-home assistance with bathing, toileting and dressing.

- Three-quarters of a million individuals in **adult day care** programs would lose access to the health care, socialization and nutrition they—and family caregivers—rely upon.
- 75,000 seniors will lose access to OAA **legal services**, just as elder abuse and fraud is on the rise.

The OAA's **National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP)** plays a critical role in supporting family caregivers, who deliver the majority of long-term care in the U.S. It provides information and access to supportive services, respite care and counseling. Sequestration would cut NFCSP by \$12.6 million, hurting the approximately 700,000 family caregivers supported annually, and the older adults for whom they care.

Social Services Block Grant and **Community Services Block Grant**: Collectively, approximately 345,000 adults age 60+ will lose life-saving services provided in their communities through these flexible grants, such as adult protective services, transportation, meals and adult foster care.

Health and Safety

The **Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)** would be reduced by \$285 million. Sequestration could cut off heating to 290,000 senior households.

The **Geriatric Education Centers (GECs)** and related education and training on the unique needs of the elderly for physicians, nurses, dentists, social workers, and behavioral health professionals would be reduced by more than \$2.5 million—at a time when the population is aging yet our system struggles to render age-appropriate care.

Nearly 485,000 seniors would lose access to **evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention services**, which help them manage chronic conditions, improve their health and wellness, administer medications safely and effectively, and prevent falls.

One key OAA program protects the safety of seniors living in nursing homes or similar institutional environments: the **Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP)**. Funded at only \$17 million in FY 2012, sequestration would leave more nursing home residents at serious risk of abuse and exploitation.

Jobs, Economic Security and Civic Engagement

The **Senior Community Service Employment Program** (Title V of the OAA) helps low-income older adults build work skills while supporting their communities. With sequestration of 8.2 percent:

- 6,400 fewer unemployed low-income older adults will get hired and paid, and
- 3.5 million fewer community service hours will be provided by local nonprofit, faith-based and government agencies, including 855,000 fewer hours serving the elderly.
- The value of the SCSEP community service to be lost is about \$76.4 million, or more than double the cut in SCSEP funding of \$36.7 million.

Sequestration would cut \$32 million from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's **Section 202 Housing for the Elderly**, which means that 114,000 households would receive reduced unit maintenance and supportive services crucial to remaining in the community.

More than 30,000 older Americans would lose the opportunity to volunteer through national service: Senior Companion Program, Foster Grandparent Program, and RSVP. For four decades, these **Senior Corps** programs have harnessed the talents of millions of seniors in meeting critical needs everywhere.