



**Perspectives that Shaped the Present:
Celebrating 40 Years of OAA Nutrition Programs**

August 23, 2012

Carol V. O'Shaughnessy, Principal Policy Analyst
National Health Policy Forum

Older Americans Act of 1965

P.L. 89-73, July 14, 1965



Lyndon Johnson signing the OAA, 1965



OAA, Influenced by Political and Policy Trends in Aging

- **1965:** Legacy of the Great Society: Nutrition program began as a demonstration project in the late 1960s
- **1970s:** New Federalism: State and area agency on aging infrastructure development
- **1980s-present:** Development of aging services infrastructure and home and community-based services system

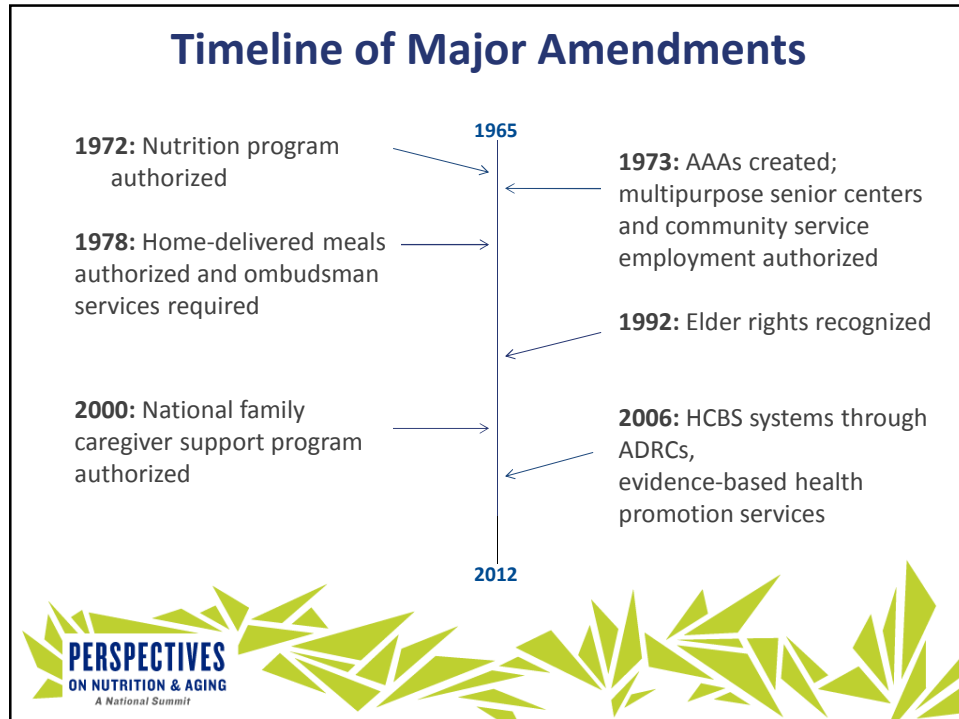


OAA Major Amendments

- 1965 Act was one of the foundation pieces for evolving public policy on aging
 - Creation of strategies, programs, and services to meet needs of older people
 - Provision of tangible and intangible help to innumerable older people
 - Continuous and dynamic identification of needs of older people
 - Development of nationwide aging infrastructure
 - Recruitment of thousands of career professionals to field of aging

Source: Robert Binstock. From the Great Society to the Aging Society—25 Years of the Older Americans Act. Generations, 1991





OAA Nutrition Program Purpose

Purpose:

1. to reduce hunger and food insecurity;
2. to promote socialization of older individuals; and
3. to promote health and well-being of older individuals by assisting [them] to gain access to nutrition and other disease prevention and health promotion services to delay the onset of adverse health conditions resulting from poor nutritional health or sedentary behavior.”

42 USC 3030

PERSPECTIVES
ON NUTRITION & AGING
A National Summit

OAA Nutrition Program Purpose

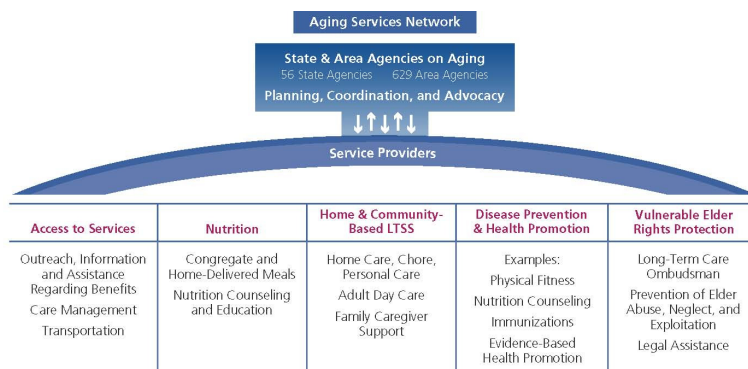
1972 Legislation:

“Many elderly persons do not eat adequately because (1) they cannot afford to do so; (2) they lack the skills to select and prepare nourishing and well-balanced meals; (3) they have limited mobility which may impair their capacity to shop and cook for themselves; and (4) they have feelings of rejection and loneliness which obliterate the incentive necessary to prepare and eat a meal alone...there is an acute need for national policy which provides older Americans, particularly those with low-incomes, with low cost, nutritionally sound meals...Besides promoting better health...through improved nutrition, such a program would reduce the isolation of old age, offering older Americans an opportunity to live their remaining years in dignity.”

P.L. 92-258, Nutrition Program for the Elderly Act, enacted March 22, 1972

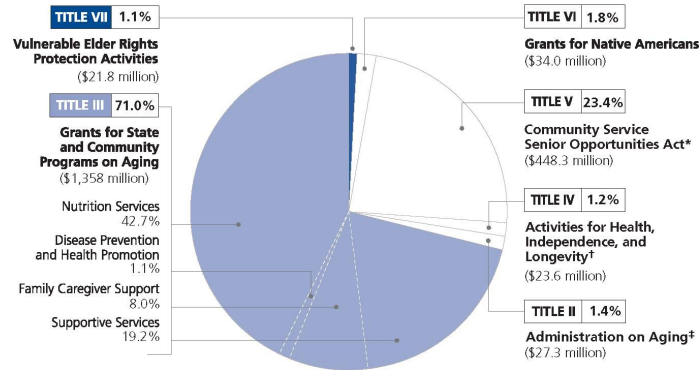


Aging Services Network



Older Americans Act, FY 2012 Funding

Total: \$1.9 billion

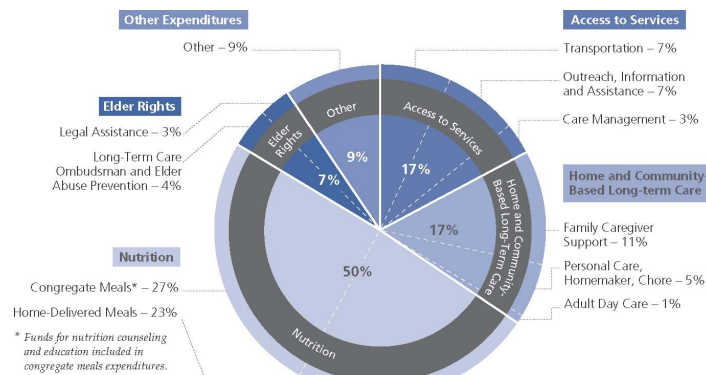


Source: Prepared by the National Health Policy Forum, based on e-mail communications with AoA staff, and phone conversations with DOL staff, February 2012. For complete references, see www.nhpf.org.



Older Americans Act: Federal Expenditures for Services Authorized by Title III and Title VII, FY 2010

Total: \$1.041 billion



* Funds for nutrition counseling and education included in congregate meals expenditures.



OAA: Broad Mission, Limited Resources

- Many advocates say OAA resources have not kept pace with increasing older population
- Effect of state budgetary woes on aging programs
- Aging network successful in leveraging non-OAA funds and in developing varied services programs
- Attention to scarce resources will continue to have relevance over coming years
- What challenges does the aging of the baby boom pose for the aging infrastructure and nutrition services providers?
- How should the OAA nutrition program be conceptualized for new realities of the 21st century?



For More Information National Health Policy Forum Resources

- The Older Americans Act of 1965: Programs and Funding, Carol V. O'Shaughnessy, February 23, 2012 http://www.nhpf.org/library/the-basics/Basics_OlderAmericansAct_02-23-12.pdf
- The Aging Services Network: Serving a Vulnerable and Growing Elderly Population in Tough Economic Times, Carol V. O'Shaughnessy, April 11, 2008. <http://www.nhpf.org/library/details.cfm/2880>
- Aging and Disability Resource Centers: Federal and State Efforts to Guide Consumers Through the Long-Term Services and Supports Maze, Carol V. O'Shaughnessy, November 16, 2010. http://www.nhpf.org/library/background-papers/BP81_ADRCs_11-19-10.pdf

