Date

The Honorable FirstName LastName

U.S. House of Representatives or United States Senate

XXXX House Office Building or XXXX Senate Building

Washington, DC ZipCode

Dear Congressman/Congresswoman or Senator:

As you and your colleagues work to avert going over the fiscal cliff, (Insert Name of Program) respectfully requests that you give careful consideration to the impact your decisions could have on the seniors who rely on us as their primary food source. Specifically, we request that you give special attention to the direct impact sequestration and modifications to the charitable tax deduction would have on our ability to provide the good nutrition your senior constituents need to remain healthy, independent and in their homes for as long as possible

Insert paragraph about your program. Who you are serving? What challenges are you facing?

Growth in demand, hunger, costs, etc. To (Insert Name of Program), these are not just numbers – these figures represent (Choose one: dozens/hundreds/thousands) of individual faces, stories and lives of people who need help. (Consider Inserting a Story)

Were it not for federal support provided through the Older Americans Act (OAA), there is no question that the number of seniors struggling to access and afford food would be even greater. The OAA Senior Nutrition Programs, including both congregate and Meals On Wheels, are the only federally supported nutrition and anti-hunger programs specifically designed to serve seniors and their nutritional and social needs. Regrettably however, these programs, unlike many other federal nutrition programs, are not protected from sequestration and the estimated 8.2% cut scheduled to go into effect on January 2, 2013.

We ask that you support actions to ensure that funding for OAA Senior Nutrition programs, like other federal nutrition programs cited in the Budget Control Act of 2011, are protected from sequestration and/or further cuts of any larger budget agreement. We, too, are serving an equally vulnerable segment of our society and save significant taxpayer dollars by helping seniors remain in their own homes, which they prefer, and are reducing the risk of more costly medical care via Medicaid and Medicare.

We, like the thousands of Meals On Wheels programs across the country, are an exemplary example of a strong and successful public-private partnership. About (Insert percentage of federal funding or percentage of funding that must be raised from outside sources to pay for meals. Insert sentence about the use of the federal dollars you receive and how critical they are to your work and mission).

We rely in large part on charitable contributions from individual donors to support our mission. In addition to the challenges we have outlined above (food and transportation, weak economy, flat or cut funding from state and/or federal sources), we fear that any changes to limit the deductibility of charitable contributions would have a significant adverse impact on our program. Individuals donate to (Insert Name of Program) because they know that by doing so they are making a difference in the lives of seniors in our community. But, the charitable tax deduction is a positive incentive and it does encourage much larger gifts. Any legislative actions that would have the effect of reducing or eliminating the charitable tax deduction as it currently exists would be a disincentive to donors and would undoubtedly impact on our program’s ability to (Insert details on your program’s mission/work).

(Insert Name of Program) is making a real difference in the lives of our most vulnerable seniors in (Insert Name of Community/Counties). Now is not the time to cut funding for OAA Senior Nutrition Programs or change the charitable tax deduction that would limit our ability to raise additional funding necessary. (Request a meeting to discuss these issues further. Consider an invitation to visit your program and/or deliver meals. If you would like additional information, please have a member of your staff contact (Insert point of contact from your program).

Sincerely,