



## **Federal Aging Policy Updates**

**Amy Gotwals, Chief, Policy and External Affairs**

**For the Texas Association of Area Agencies on Aging**

**2.7.24**



Connecting You to Community Services



**AAA/Title VI  
Research**



**Rural Social and Health Care Engagement**



# Key Issues in 2024

- Public policy opportunities: OAA, caregiving, CMS, etc.
- Increased attention on brain health, dementia
- New avenues to work on housing and homelessness
- Continued public health involvement
- New contracting opportunities with health care
- Caregiving innovations
- Social engagement
- And what's the next opportunity?



# DRAFT 2024–2026 Strategic Plan

GOALS

OBJECTIVES

Advocacy	Visibility and Awareness	Capacity Enhancement
Champion policies to advance support for older adults, individuals with disabilities and caregivers.	Position USAgings and its members as the leading experts and change agents in aging and home and community-based services.	Enhance and expand members’ ability to successfully provide a range of aging and caregiver services to improve the health and well-being of older adults and people with disabilities.
Advocate for increased, flexible and sustainable funding mechanisms to drive member impact.	Lead efforts to inform policymakers, key stakeholders and the public on the value and impact of the AAA and Title VI networks.	Refine USAgings’ portfolio of professional development and technical assistance resources.
Expand reach into key federal agencies and Congress to amplify USAgings’ influence on policy and funding issues affecting our members.	Develop strategic partnerships and recruit champions that raise the visibility of USAgings’ members’ mission and priorities.	Be recognized as the leader in developing and supporting AAA, CBO and network partnerships and contracts with health care to expand access to social care.
Provide training and tools to strengthen members’ advocacy efforts.	Implement a cohesive communications strategy to elevate the profile of AAA and Title VI, and USAgings programs.	Explore and develop new ways to increase member and stakeholder engagement and collaboration.
Organizational Excellence		
Invest in USAgings’ staffing model and infrastructure to ensure resources are aligned with strategic initiatives.	Foster a culture of ongoing professional growth and sustained well-being for staff.	Optimize organizational systems and policies to enhance operational efficiency.

## Strategic Outcomes

- USAgings’ **impact** on aging and health policy expands, with successful initiatives to influence legislation, regulations and other policymaking.
- USAgings members’ **ability to serve** older adults, caregivers and people with disabilities is enhanced by access to best practices, training and technical assistance, funding opportunities and other resources.
- USAgings has formed new and strengthened existing **partnerships and relationships**, including those with the health care sector, for-profit entities and philanthropic organizations.
- USAgings members and key stakeholders have increased their **engagement** in the organization’s programs and resources.
- USAgings’ staff feel they have increased **support and resources** to perform and succeed in their roles.

**MISSION:** USAgings represents and supports the national network of Area Agencies on Aging and advocates for the Title VI Native American Aging Programs that help older adults and people with disabilities live with optimal health, well-being, independence and dignity in their homes and communities.

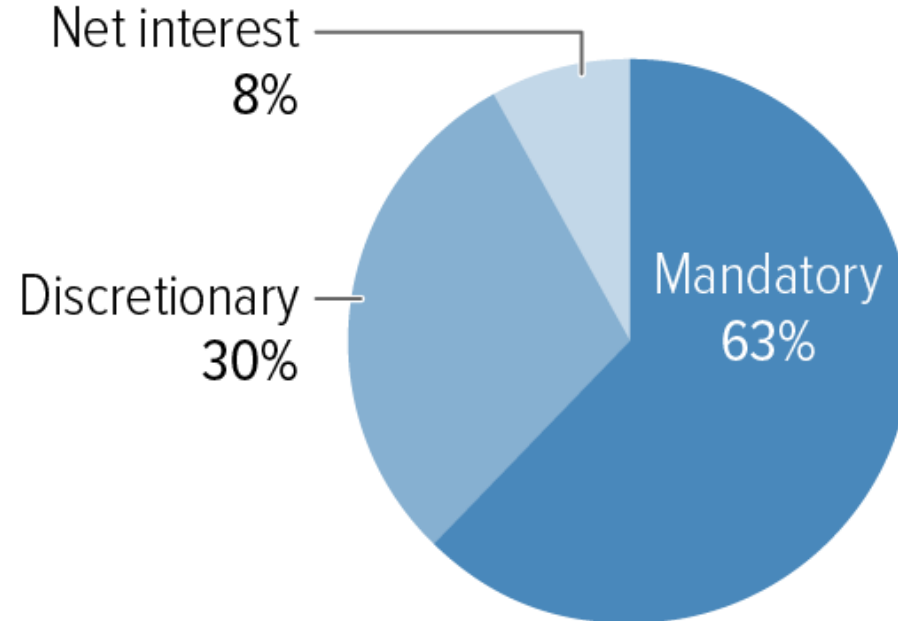
**VISION:** USAgings believes that every person should be able to age with optimal health, well-being, independence and dignity in their homes and communities. To achieve this, we are committed to building a society that values and supports people as they age.



# **FY 2024 Funding**

# Most of the Federal Budget = Social Security and Major Health Programs (Mandatory Spending)

## Types of Federal Spending, Fiscal Year 2023

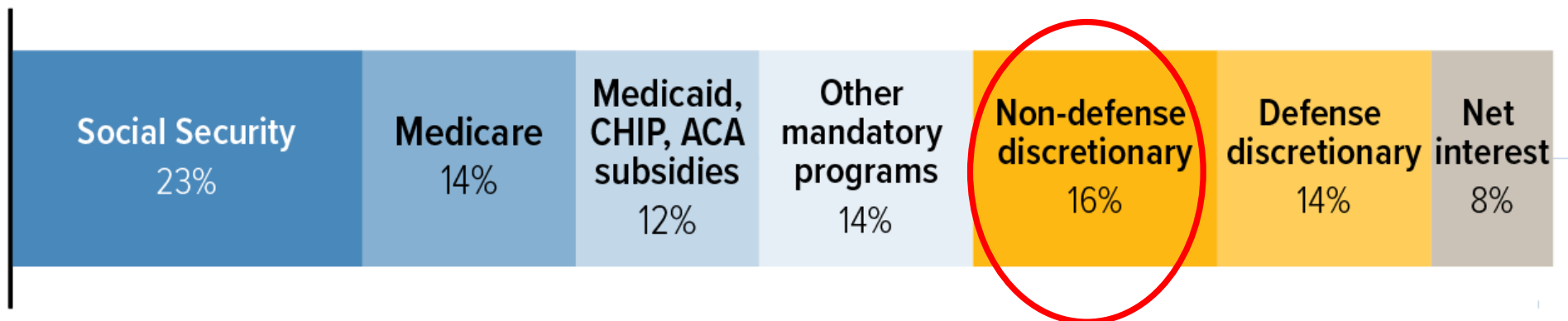


Note: Does not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

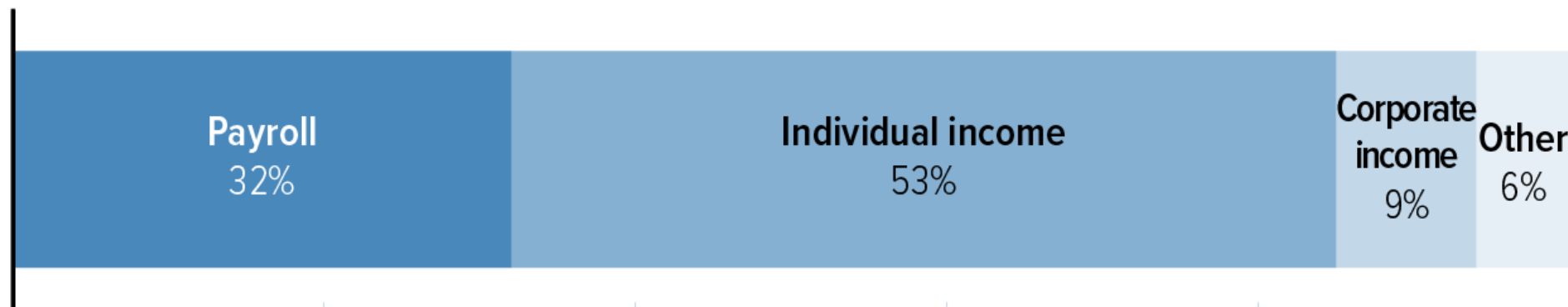
Source: Congressional Budget Office



## Components of Federal Spending



## Components of Federal Tax Revenue



Note: "CHIP" = Children's Health Insurance Plan. "ACA" = Affordable Care Act. "Other" includes excise, customs duties, and more.  
Data are for fiscal year 2023 and do not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Source: Congressional Budget Office

# USAgging Older Americans Act Top Funding Priorities

- Title III B Supportive Services
- Title III E National Family Caregiver Support Program
- Title VI Native American Aging Programs

➡ Calling for a doubling of these essential programs that have been long underfunded.

➡ Also support increasing funding for *all* titles!



# President's FY 2024 Budget

- **Title III B** Supportive Services: 22% increase
- **Title III E** National Family Caregiver Support Program: 20% increase
- **Title VI** Native American Aging Programs: nearly doubling of Part A, 32% for Part C
- **Title III C** Nutrition: overall ~20 percent increase; but 41% C1 congregate, 12% increase C2 home-delivered, then NSIP cut 30%
- **Title III D** Evidence-Based Health and Wellness Programs: 0.2% increase

# Debt Ceiling Deal

- Pauses the existing debt limit through January 2025 (not a rise of the ceiling, but a pausing on the \$31.4 billion ceiling previous Congresses enacted)
- **Cuts \$1 trillion over 10 years (projected) but it all comes from a portion of NDD funding**
- Caps amount to frozen topline number this coming fiscal year and only 1% growth for FY 2025
- 1% across-the-board cut if full-year funding not final by April

# Senate/**House** FY 2024 Levels

- **Title III B** Supportive Services: Level funded; level funded
- **Title III E** National Family Caregiver Support Program: \$5 million increase for demos/RAISE, not formula \$; level
- **Title VI** Native American Aging Programs: nearly doubling of Part A, 32% for Part C; level funded
- **Title III C** Nutrition: +\$25 million boost for C1 congregate, \$11 million boost to C2 home-delivered, then NSIP cut 30% as President's budget suggested; level funded
- **Title III D** Evidence-Based Health and Wellness Programs: Level funded; level funded

# Next Steps on FY 2024

- Fiscal Year 2024 began October 1
- In mid-January, House and Senate leaders agreed on a top-line number of \$1.66 trillion (equates to less than 1% decrease for NDD, 3% increase for defense). Back to the same deal they made back in May 2023!
- They still need to hammer out the details between Senate and House bills on every line item, which is why another round of CRs was needed until March.
- Latest CR for Labor/HHS/Education programs runs through March 8, 2024

# Advocacy Needed!

- See USAging's latest *Advocacy Alert!* Covers appropriations and MIPPA funding.
- MIPPA authorization and funding for AAAs, SHIPs, ADRCs and Center for Benefits Enrollment was not passed with other "health extenders" in the last CRs.
- Since the program is expired as of Sept. 30, it **MUST** get renewed ASAP or ACL will start having issues administering it—and eventually, funding it!
- Please urge all your MIPPA stakeholders and partners to take action now!

# FY 2025 Not Looking Much Better

- It will get a late start thanks to the hung-over FY 2024 process
- President's budget likely to be late
- Election will diminish political willpower for actual work of budgeting/appropriating, increase political rhetoric
- We're still stuck under the caps of the May 2023 debt ceiling deal, so only 1 percent growth overall is allowed for non-Veterans NDD programs



# **OAA Regs and Reauth**



# OAA Regulations

- Our August [25-page letter](#) to ACL
- Optimistic about much of the regs, but not waiting around on AAA contracting issue
- We pushed for a 3-year implementation, but ACL could choose 2-year approach, so AAAs and Title VIs will need to quickly engage once the regs are released
- USAging will provide an analysis on the provisions we addressed in our letter or any surprises we find!
- ANY DAY NOW but by end of March at latest

# OAA Reauthorization

- Expires at the end of FY 2024, which is Sept. 30, 2024
- Congress's timing depending on motivations of Members/staff
- We will work with authorizing committees in House and Senate, as well as Senate Aging Committee
- **Next Steps: use our OAA reauthorization tools to engage with your federal elected officials!**  
(Coming soon.)



**OAA Reauthorization**

**Recommendations**

**NOT YET PUBLIC**

# AAA Independence, Health Care Recommendation

- Ensure that AAAs and other Aging Network community-based organizations are able to further meet their missions by tapping health care or other private funding to serve more older adults.
- Clear up confusing language.
- Differentiate SUA approval when OAA funds are used from when they are not.
- Strengthen “our” language from the last reauthorization to make clear that not only can AAAs engage in these outside activities, but no state approval is explicitly needed (may need to include language such as “assuming all OAA responsibilities and duties under this Act are being met” or similar).

# Title III C Nutrition Recommendations

- Unify the C1 and C2 funding streams under one III C Nutrition Services.
- HDM and congregate programs goals and parameters remain.
- Add a third bucket of nutrition services that can use III C: grab and go, etc. Write this broadly and reasonably to allow for future innovation.

# Title III D Recommendation

- Allow use of evidence-informed programs under Title III D.

# Social Engagement Center Recommendation

- Authorize a national training and technical assistance center in the OAA.
- Make clear that the focus is on professional and program development for AAAs, Title VIIs and other Aging Network organizations.
- Center would offer T&TA, best practices, innovations, spurring replication, and other tools to support practitioners working to increase social engagement and reduce social isolation and loneliness.



# Increased Administrative Funding Recommendation

- Increase maximum percentage allowed for administration of the Area Plan to at least 12 percent from current 10 percent.

# Title VI Programs

## Recommendations

- Create a new funding stream for Title VI programs that is dedicated to supportive services (e.g., separate from the Title VI Part A nutrition programs), such as transportation, in-home care, legal assistance and other supports that are so desperately needed.
- Create more training, professional development and capacity-building resources to support Title VI grantees to bolster what AoA/ACL already provides.
- Ensure any nutrition services flexibility added in Title III (i.e., alternative models like grab-and-go) can also be provided under Title VI.

# Authorized Funding Levels Recommendation

- Urge Congress to significantly increase the authorized funding levels for all titles to better reflect need and the costs of implementing the Act.

# Sneak Peak at 2024 Policy Priorities

- OAA Reauthorization and FY 2025 Funding
- Caregivers
- Medicaid HCBS
- Social and Health Care Integration
- *To be published in mid-March!*

# Advocates To-Do List

- **THIS WEEK:** Respond to latest *Advocacy Alert* on FY 2024 funding and MIPPA!
- **TODAY:** Register for the Aging Policy Briefing (and get your hotel room)!
- **THIS MONTH:** Stand by for USAging OAA Reauthorization Toolkit to engage with Congress, your own grassroots
- **FEB-MARCH?:** Be ready to read to OAA regulations; USAging will have a side-by-side analysis on key provisions



# **CMS/Health Care Opportunities**

# CMS 2024 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Rule

- The annual schedule that sets payment rates for physicians, other professionals—and can include policy changes
- Open for comment in the fall; USAging's Sept. 11 letter: [usaging.org/advocacy](https://usaging.org/advocacy)
- Final rule released in November
- Rates take effect January 1, 2024 as do many policy provisions



# CMS 2024 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Rule

- **CMS to pay for certain caregiver training services in specified circumstances**
- When practitioners train caregivers to support patients with certain diseases or illnesses (e.g., dementia) in carrying out a treatment plan.
- Medicare will pay for these services when furnished by a physician or a non-physician practitioner (nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, certified nurse-midwives, physician assistants, and clinical psychologists) or therapist (physical therapist, occupational therapist, or speech language pathologist) as part of the patient's individualized treatment plan or therapy plan of care.

# CMS 2024 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Rule

## Services Addressing Health-Related Social Needs

→ CMS to pay separately “when clinicians involve certain types of health care support staff such as community health workers, care navigators, and peer support specialists in furnishing medically necessary care.”

- **Community Health Integration** (encourages ACO partnerships with CBOs to help address health-related social needs (HRSNs) & it counts toward MIPS)

# CMS 2024 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Rule

## Services Addressing HRSNs, Pt. 2

- **Principal Illness Navigation Services** (codes that could be used by CBOs under direction of physician for peer support, CHWs, care navigation)
- **Social Determinants of Health Risk Assessment** (coding and payment to physicians when needed; optional use in Annual Wellness Visit by physicians)

# USAgging Key Areas of Feedback

- Role of AAAs in addressing health-related social needs
  - The most effective way for the health system to address HRSNs is through contracting with social care entities
- Principal illness navigation services
  - Highlighted AAAs involvement in CMS' Community-Based Care Transition Program (CCTP)
- Payment for caregiver training services should include outsource non-medical training to AAAs
- Medicare Part B payment for services involving community health workers should address functions, not titles

# **Join us for the next Aging Policy Briefing & Capitol Hill Day!**

**March 12-13, 2024**

Learn more at [www.usaging.org/apb](http://www.usaging.org/apb)

**USAging** | **Aging Policy Briefing  
& Capitol Hill Day**



49TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADESHOW

*Save the Date!*

*Tampa*

JULY 8–11 | 2024





Leaders in Aging Well at Home

**Amy Gotwals**  
**Chief, Public Policy & External**  
**Affairs**

agotwals@usaging.org

1100 New Jersey Ave, SE, Suite 350  
Washington, DC 20003  
202.872.0888

[www.facebook.com/theUSAging](https://www.facebook.com/theUSAging)

[www.instagram.com/theUSAging](https://www.instagram.com/theUSAging)

[www.x.com/theUSAging](https://www.x.com/theUSAging)

[www.x.com/amygotwals](https://www.x.com/amygotwals)