Senate Passes Older Americans Act Reauthorization!
Lawmakers Unanimously Approve the Bipartisan Bill

July 16, 2015

n4a is pleased to announce that today—just days after the 50th Anniversary of the Older Americans Act and the 2015 White House Conference on Aging—Senators unanimously approved a bipartisan bill to reauthorize the Older Americans Act (S. 192)! The bill passed under a procedure reserved for non-controversial legislation, so neither a roll-call nor voice vote was required. As long as no Senators raised an objection to S. 192 coming to the floor in this manner by a certain time, the bill passed automatically.

n4a has worked tirelessly over the past five years with OAA leaders in both parties, their staff, other national advocates and our members to achieve this legislative victory. We applaud the relentless efforts of Senate leaders to work through issues in a bipartisan manner and to ultimately approve a three-year reauthorization bill that will provide stability for OAA programs through 2018. (Please see n4a’s Legislative Update for details on this bipartisan compromise bill, which has n4a’s support.)

In a statement about today’s achievement, n4a CEO Sandy Markwood said, “Unanimous approval of the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2015 (S. 192) by the Senate is a thrilling milestone achievement that puts us much closer to ensuring that OAA programs will continue to support older adults aging in place and remain living independently in their homes and communities for as long as possible. n4a members work on the front lines of aging every day, providing a broad range of services and supports and doing their part to realize the vision of the Older Americans Act in communities all across the country. We couldn’t be more pleased that, during this historic week when we celebrate the 50th anniversary of critical OAA programs, the Senate is endorsing the value of this work. We look forward to working with Members of the House and the President to see OAA reauthorization signed into law.”

n4a members should drive thank-you calls and emails to their Senate offices this week (be sure to note if your Senators were co-sponsors of S. 192, as they will appreciate the extra kudos). n4a particularly thanks the leadership group who worked together to achieve the bipartisan compromise measure that passed today: Senate HELP Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA) and Subcommittee leaders Sen. Richard Burr (R-NC) and Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT). Sen. Sanders, it should be noted, has been pushing for reauthorization since 2011, when he chaired the subcommittee and introduced the first bill of this reauthorization process.

Next Steps:
While this is a key and critical step, our work to reauthorize OAA is far from done! Now we will need to focus on getting an OAA reauthorization bill through the House. n4a will be quickly pivoting our efforts to meet those challenges and you can help by laying the groundwork with your Representatives as to the Act’s value to constituents back home.

If you have questions about this Legislative Update, please contact n4a’s Public Policy and Advocacy team, Amy Gotwals and Autumn Campbell at 202.872.0888 or agotwals@n4a.org and acampbell@n4a.org.