



Wis. Caregiver Support Community Statewide Webinar
Advocacy Report
5-28-24

In-District Aging Advocacy Day event

The Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) hosted its 8th Annual Aging Advocacy Day on May 14, 2024, in Madison. Advocates from across Wisconsin gathered to learn from and meet with other constituents from their Senate and Assembly district and develop their advocacy skills around WAAN's top policy priorities. In the afternoon, advocates meet with their legislative representatives to provide information and share personal stories to help them understand how specific policy issues and proposals impact individuals, families, and older constituents.

To build on this important advocacy, WAAN is encouraging advocates in the state to meet with their legislators in the district alongside other aging network partners. In-district advocacy events allow residents to individualize discussions with their legislators, speak directly with participants of services, and continue long-term relationship building.

Statewide aging network partners are helping to coordinate, plan, and host these in-district events with aging advocates. Aging and Disability Professionals Association of Wisconsin (ADPAW), senior centers, and other network partners throughout Wisconsin are needed to reach out and connect with other partners and individual advocates in all corners of the state to help ensure that all Wisconsin Representatives and Senators are invited to at least one in-district advocacy event. Our goal is to have all senate and assembly districts covered by individual county or regional area in-district meetings.

ADPAW region leaders, senior centers, and other network partners do not need to take on this responsibility alone. WAAN members, with the assistance of AARP Wisconsin, are committed to assisting with the planning of these meetings and the training of in-district hosts.

Together, the Wisconsin aging network can reach all legislators in their communities this summer to share our most important policy priorities.

For more information on upcoming in-district events (coming soon) and for resource and training materials go to: <https://gwaar.org/aging-advocacy-day-2024>.



Older Americans Act Reauthorization

In 2025, the Older Americans Act (OAA) will celebrate its 60th anniversary! The OAA is currently reauthorized through Sept. 30, 2024. A strong OAA reauthorization is key to ensuring a network of national, state, tribal, and community-based organizations can plan for and implement programming that aims to ensure all older adults, especially the most vulnerable, can age well with health and economic security.

The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP), of which U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin is a member, is overseeing the 2024 reauthorization of the OAA. The HELP committee held a hearing on Thursday, March 7. You can view the hearing [here \(Senate HELP Committee hearing\)](#). Last week, the Senate Special Committee on Aging also held a hearing on OAA Reauthorization. You can view that hearing [here \(Senate Aging Committee hearing\)](#).

House and Senate members are in their home states and districts this week for a brief recess period. This is a perfect time to connect with your federal legislators regarding the importance of reauthorizing the OAA.

Take action:

Contact your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators Tammy Baldwin and Ron Johnson now to advocate for reauthorization of OAA programs and services. Use USAging's Reauthorization Toolkit at www.usaging.org/OAA as you engage your Members of Congress and local grassroots advocates! To get started, see the list of ideas and actions below.

- **Send an email or letter to your Representative and Senators** (See [Wisconsin Members of 118th Congress](#) for contact information). Use USAging's [template letter](#) to get started educating your Members of Congress. It is particularly important that lawmakers hear from you if they serve on the Senate HELP and/or Aging Committee(s) or the House Education and Labor Committees, which have jurisdiction over OAA in Congress. USAging has posted a list of [key House and Senate committee members](#).
- **Engage your Members of Congress on social media.** Use USAging's OAA [social media toolkit](#) on Facebook, LinkedIn and X to spread the word about OAA! Make sure to follow and tag your lawmakers in these posts.
- **Ask your grassroots advocates to email/post a short social media note to lawmakers.** Members monitor their email/website traffic for constituent correspondence, and personal messages resonate most. Ask your grassroots advocates to [share why OAA is important to them](#).
- **Share stories in person.** Attend a townhall meeting this week to share how important OAA services are to older adults and caregivers. Better yet, invite your Members of



Congress to come see your agency in action and meet some of their constituents receiving OAA services!

We must ensure that all members of Congress know that OAA programs and services enable older constituents and family caregivers to age with health, well-being, dignity and independence in their districts and states.