



## Statewide Caregiver Support Advocacy Update 7-23-24

### Upcoming Elections

Voters in **Congressional District 8** have a **Special Election** to fill the unfinished term of the 8th District Congressman, Mike Gallagher. This Special Election will occur at the same time as the August Primary (8/13/24) and the November Election (11/5/24).

Since this Special Election is concurrent with Wisconsin's Primary and General election, the office of Representative to Congressional District 8 will appear TWICE on voter's ballots - once for the Special Election and again for the General Election. **Voters should be prepared to vote in both contests.**

The winner of the Congressional District 8 Special Election will complete the remainder of the current term and the winner of the General Election will serve the next term, beginning in January 2024.

This summer and fall there will also be statewide elections. The offices to be elected include U.S. President, U.S. Senate (1 of 2), 8 U.S. Representatives, 16 Wis. Senators, all 99 Wis. Assembly Representatives, and several county-wide offices including County Clerk, register of Deeds, County Treasurer, and District Attorney. The statewide elections will take place on:

- **Wis. Fall Partisan Primary – August 13, 2024**

#### Registration Deadlines for the Aug. primary election:

- By Mail: Wednesday, July 24, 2024
- In Person: Tuesday, August 13, 2024
- Online: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 ([Register to vote!](#))

- **Wis. General Election – November 5, 2024**

#### Registration Deadlines for the Nov. election:

- By Mail: Wednesday, October 16, 2024
- In Person: Tuesday, November 5, 2024
- Online: Wednesday, October 16, 2024 ([Register to vote!](#))

Check out [VOTE411](#) for information about the candidates on your ballot and [MyVote Wisconsin](#) to learn what's on your ballot. For information regarding rides to the polls, see <https://disabilityvote.org/2024/rides-to-the-polls-2024/>. For additional voter resources, check out the Disability Vote Coalition materials at <https://disabilityvote.org/resources/>.



## Other Voting News

- **Wisconsin Supreme Court Restores Use of Ballot Drop Boxes**

Earlier this month, in a 4-3 ruling, the Wisconsin Supreme Court issued a decision that restores the use of ballot drop boxes in Wisconsin. This decision, which reverses the court's July 2022 decision to prohibit the use of secure voter drop boxes, will be in effect for the upcoming August primary and November general election. Drop boxes have long been available in some Wisconsin communities and around the country. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when voters wanted a safe and convenient way to return their absentee ballots in time, the number of drop boxes was expanded to 570 located in 66 of Wisconsin's 72 counties. Voter drop boxes are required or broadly accessible in 29 states including neighboring Minnesota, Michigan, and Illinois.

Last week, the Wisconsin Elections Commission provided an [update](#), including best practice guidance, to municipal clerks across the state.

- **Disability Vote Coalition – Lunch & Learn, Voting Rights in Residential Care Settings, July 23, 12:00-12:45 p.m.**

Voting rights is an important resident rights issue. The Disability Vote Coalition can help voters in care facilities understand their voting rights as a resident and learn their options for how to cast their vote. Join us to get information about voting options for residents in residential care settings! For more information and to register go to: <https://disabilityvote.org/2024/lunch-and-learn-july-2024-webinar/>.

## State Budget 2025-2027

The Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) is gearing up for the 2025-2027 budget process. With Aging Advocacy Day behind us, the focus shifted to meetings with state legislators in their districts to further discuss the WAAN (and local community) budget priorities. To date, 22 of the state's 33 Senators and related Assembly Representatives within those districts, have been or will be, invited by an ADRC or other aging network partner to an in-district meeting this summer and fall. While not all the legislators invited, have attended, turnouts for the meetings have been very good and fruitful discussions are taking place!

WAAN is also scheduling meetings with leadership at the state Department of Health Services (DHS) and the Department of Transportation (DOT) to discuss WAAN's budget priorities. The meeting with DOT is scheduled to take place on Aug. 14, 2024. The meeting with DHS will be confirmed shortly. Departments will be submitting their budgets to the Governor by mid-Sept. WAAN will also be scheduling a meeting with Governor Evers' staff to discuss our budget priorities and encourage the Governor to include these priorities in his budget scheduled to be released next February.

## Federal Fiscal Year 2025 Appropriations – Older Americans Act

### House Committee Passes FY25 Funding Bill for OAA Programs: Good News & Bad News

Last week, the House Appropriations Committee passed the Labor-Health and Human Services-Education (Labor-HHS) appropriations bill. Details are now available regarding funding numbers for all Older Americans Act (OAA) programs.

**Good News:** The House bill includes increases over the FY 2024 funding for OAA Title III B – Supportive Services, Title III E – National Family Caregiver Support Program, and Title VI – Native American Nutrition, Supportive and Caregiver Services.

- *Title III B – Supportive Services*  
Home and Community-Based Supportive Services received a \$5 million increase (1.2%). While not a large increase, this program is often overlooked, so even a small gain for these critical services is appreciated.
- *Title III E – National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP)*  
NFCSP received a \$3 million increase. Note, it is unclear at this time if the additional funding is intended for formula funding that goes out to the Aging Network or if it is intended for a special initiative such as implementation of the Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, & Engage (RAISE) Act's National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers.
- *Title VI – Native American Nutrition, Supportive and Caregiver Services*  
Native American Nutrition and Supportive Services program received a \$4 million increase (10.5%) and the Native American Caregiver Services received a \$4 million increase (33%), for a total Title VI funding increase of \$8 million.

Additional *good news* includes a \$20 million increase for the OAA Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP). This increase would help offset some of the loss from the \$48 million funding cut in FY 2024. The House bill also proposes to move the NSIP authorizing agency from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) back to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) where the program was administered prior to 2006. It is unclear why House Appropriators chose to make this change.

**Bad News:** The House bill makes significant funding cuts for some programs, including the complete elimination of two programs:

- *Title C1 and C2 Nutrition Programs*  
Funding for C1 Congregate Meals was reduced by \$22 million and C2 Home-Delivered Meals funding received a \$15 million cut. These funding cuts bring funding for the Nutrition programs nearly back to FY 2023 funding levels.

- *Title V Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)*

The SCSEP received **no funding** under the House Committee bill. Based on an evaluation of the SCSEP that found the program led to unsubsidized employment for less than half of program participant available for employment and even lower rates of unsubsidized employment for participants with a disability and for older adults and participants with lower levels of education.

- *Adult Protective Services (APS)*

The House Committee **did not provide any funding for APS**. No details were provided as to why this decision was made.

- *Community Care Corps, the Direct Care Workforce Demonstration and the Older Adult Equity Collaborative* also received no funding under the House Committee bill.

The OAA Title III D - Evidence-Based Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Title VII Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIP), Senior Medicare Patrol program and Life Span Respite Care program all received level funding (no change from FY 2024). See USAging's [full appropriations chart](#) for more detail.

**It is not too late to change the outcome of this funding, but we will need to act soon!** It is unlikely this appropriations bill will be the final bill enacted into law. The full House is expected to take up (and likely pass) the bill in August. The U.S. Senate's Labor – HHS bill is expected to move later this month. The Senate bill is expected to include an overall 1% increase over FY 2024 (due to the funding caps included in 2023-2024 bipartisan budget agreements).

**Our advocacy is critical to ensure the OAA program increases in the House bill are maintained, while restoring Title III C and Title V funding. Efforts must continue to help legislators understand just how harmful funding cuts will be to local programs in their districts and to the many older adults in need of services.**

Every August, members of Congress take a summer recess and are back in their home states and district for the month. August is a great time to reach out to federal legislators and invite them to ride along on a home-delivered meal route, visit a congregate dining site, or help with a health promotions class. Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) and aging units are encouraged to extend an invitation to their Congressional Representative and/or Wisconsin's U.S. Senators soon (see [Wisconsin Members of the 118th Congress](#) for contact information). Additional direction from our national partners at USAging on how we can get more involved is coming soon!

*Excerpts from USAging Legislative Update - 7-15-24*