

# Older Americans Act Reauthorization Recommendations



## The Challenge

Social isolation and loneliness contribute to poor health outcomes for older adults by increasing their risk of developing serious health conditions.

### The increased risk:



Fostering social connection is critical to supporting older adults mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing.



## The Older Americans Act

The Older Americans Act (OAA) was established in 1965 to create a network of community-based services to address older adults' health and social needs. In 2020, when the OAA was last reauthorized, Congress expanded the role of the Aging Network in addressing social isolation and loneliness through screening, prevention, research, and long-term planning.



## About Us

The Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness, founded in 2018, advocates for policy change that combats the adverse effects of social isolation and loneliness. The Coalition represents some of the most influential consumer groups, patient advocates, health plans, community-based organizations, behavioral health groups, and private sector innovators in the United States. Visit our website at [www.endsocialisolation.org](http://www.endsocialisolation.org)



**To continue building on the strengths of the OAA's role in addressing social isolation and loneliness and fostering social connection, we urge Congress to:**



Safeguard the core mission of the OAA to maximize the independence, well-being, and health of older adults and their caregivers while modernizing the Aging Network's systems and programs to meet current and future needs.



Significantly increase the authorized funding levels for all OAA programs and invest in the Aging Network's capacity to reduce social isolation and loneliness among older adults and caregivers by:

- a. Increasing funding for OAA nutrition programs and supportive services to enhance community-based assistance and community service programs;
- b. Dedicating funding to expand multigenerational support services as a part of community programs;
- c. Expanding access to evidence-based disease prevention and health promotion services and advance care planning; and
- d. Extending the RAISE Family Caregivers Act and allocating additional funding to the National Family Caregiver Support Program to bolster its capacity to provide resources, access to services, respite, education, and training.



Codify directed funding to Aging Network organizations to provide resources to support training, technical assistance, and evaluations. These resources would proliferate innovative interventions, evaluated by scientific experts to address social isolation and loneliness and promote social connection, including the use of emerging technologies.



Direct ACL to provide guidance and technical assistance, informed by research and practice experts, to help states incorporate screening tools and measures on social isolation, loneliness, and social connection in their aging plans.