



# ACT FOR OLDER LIVES

OLDER LIVES ARE **NOT** EXPENDABLE

LeadingAge is advocating urgently for older adults and staff in long-term care settings—like nursing homes, assisted living and memory care—affordable housing, retirement communities, adult day programs, home and community-based services, hospice, and home health. This continuum of aging services provides critical care and supports to older adults as they live full, engaged lives.

Our nation has undervalued and under-invested in older adults for decades, and the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbating that failure. At the outset of this pandemic it was clear that older Americans and care workers were at the greatest risk, yet their needs of have been largely ignored.

Congress needs to ensure that: providers have ample PPE and rapid-response testing to do their jobs safely; states consider the health and safety of older adults as they reopen; aging services across the continuum of care are funded adequately; frontline workers, who are risking their lives to serve older people, receive pandemic pay, paid sick leave, and healthcare coverage.

Top among the LeadingAge requests to Congress for the next COVID-19 relief package are:

1. \$100 Billion fund to cover costs for PPE, supplies, staffing, treating COVID-19 residents, and current and future lost revenue for all aging services providers including providers compensated through Medicare, Medicaid, and by private payers.
2. \$1.2 Billion fund for affordable senior housing, to cover COVID-19 related costs, Service Coordinators, and wireless internet to combat social isolation and link to telehealth.
3. \$10 Billion fund to cover testing of residents and staff, including ancillary costs such as additional staff to cover for staff who test positive.
4. Allow home health agencies to be compensated for telehealth visits and for verbal orders for eligibility and billing for the duration of the pandemic to address the difficulty providers have obtaining signed orders.
5. Strengthen and provide additional funding to Medicaid and other existing programs, and to new programs, such as the Paycheck Protection Program, to ensure that older people and the providers who serve them are able to receive the care and services they need to get through the coronavirus pandemic.
6. Create a bipartisan Congressional Commission on the Future of Aging Services to identify the longstanding gaps in aging and long-term care services and develop actionable steps to better serve older Americans and prevent losses experienced in the pandemic from happening again.