



Open Letter to the Public on Build Back Better

January 11, 2022

Dear Fellow Americans,

Our futures will be decided in the coming weeks. We're all aging—and for so many of us who are receiving help as we age, who are caring for an older loved one or anyone who might do so one day, now is the time to act.

We represent nonprofit organizations that provide care and services for millions of older Americans and their families, and want to share a few critical facts about what older Americans and their families need from Congress right now.

Millions of Americans like you rely on home and community-based services to grow older in their own homes—but there aren't enough professional caregivers to provide assistance with basic needs, such as dropping off groceries for your aunt, giving your mother a bath, or driving you to a medical appointment.

Older Americans need a safe, affordable place to live—but there isn't enough affordable housing for people who, despite having worked over their lifetimes, cannot afford their rent—or those who have to choose between paying rent and buying medicine or food. Demand for affordable senior housing is so great that many people languish on waiting lists for years with no guarantee of ever accessing a home.

Half of all Americans will need the help of a home care worker, nursing assistant and other caregiving professional at some point as they age—but the country's workforce does not include enough of them. That's why Congress must deliver long-overdue workforce investments to ensure our long-term care system isn't crushed under the weight of increasing demand as our country ages.

The needs are extensive and growing. Why? Because our country hasn't yet made the needed investment in a caring infrastructure strong enough to keep up as our population grows older.

Every American has a right to receive a basic level of housing, healthcare, and essential support, regardless of age. But the lack of public commitment to and financial support for our country's aging services infrastructure—including essential caregiving professionals—means that you, or your family or neighbors are denied access to these fundamental services. It is time to ensure that all of us can access the care and support we need as we age.

The Build Back Better Act includes the most consequential programs and initiatives affecting older adults and families in decades. Don't let this moment pass. Tell your family, friends, neighbors, local media, and elected officials that we can't miss this opportunity to increase home-based care, affordable senior housing, and the full range of aging services across the country. We need action now.

Sincerely,

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