

May 12, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Vice President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden and Vice President Harris,

Our nation is aging rapidly. Each day, 10,000 Americans turn 65 and nearly one in every 10 adults over 65 lives below the poverty level. We're growing older and living longer—and the nation isn't prepared. But with thoughtful, coordinated leadership, your Administration can make a vital improvement to how we age in this country.

On behalf of more than 5,000 faith-based and mission-driven aging and disability services providers across the country, we urge you to add a critical component to our existing care and programs for older adults: a strong, visible White House Office on Aging Policy. With this action, not only will you deliver focused, effective coordination of the country's many aging-related federal programs, but you will also ensure that our nation honors the unique needs of older adults from all walks of life.

Responsibilities within the federal government for policies related to older adults are spread across more than 25 agencies. These efforts and programs have evolved without overarching leadership and coordination, resulting in severely inadequate support, with redundancies, gaps, and conflicting eligibility requirements. Millions of Americans will benefit from oversight and leadership provided by the White House.

Our nonprofit and mission-driven members have been deeply embedded in their communities for more than a century. Guided by faith and values, they have long played a special and critical role, offering essential care and support to ensure all our neighbors can reach their potential regardless of age, race, religion, or background. Therefore, we know the challenges nearly every family faces accessing care. We witness the confusion. We guide them through the complex and conflicting eligibility requirements. We assuage their trepidation about being left behind, lonely, and lost.

In your recent Executive Order on Increasing Access to High-Quality Care and Supporting Caregivers, you enlisted each and every Cabinet Secretary to direct resources to older adults and their caregivers—an [all-of-government approach](#) that we wholly support. Now you must finish the job by establishing a body to align those resources through a consistent and comprehensible approach to making care and services more accessible.

Mr. President, your trademark leadership style, driven by empathy and compassion, has never been more essential to older adults and their families. We urge you to create an office in your White House to complement your care economy proposals and align the many resources committed to older Americans so millions of families can access them more simply and faster. Our organizations are diverse in our religious traditions, but we are united in our request that you create a White House Office on Aging Policy.

Sincerely,

Katie Smith Sloan
President and CEO
LeadingAge

Karen E. Lehman
President/CEO
MHS Association

Don Shulman
President & Chief Executive Officer
Association of Jewish Aging Services

Mark D. Anderson
President & CEO
National Benevolent Association

Lisa Smith, MPA
Vice President, Advocacy and Public Policy
Catholic Health Association of the United States

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President & CEO
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Jane Mack
President & CEO
Friends Services Alliance