

**NAPSA Testimony
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Elder Justice Coordinating Council
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Thank you for the invitation to speak to you today. My name is Bill Benson. I serve as National Policy Advisor to the National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA). We are grateful to again have this opportunity to provide testimony to the Elder Justice Coordinating Council, as I did in 2012, almost four years ago to the day. It is a pleasure to be here before all of you and especially my long-time colleague Edwin Walker, with whom I worked during my tenure with the Administration on Aging. Providing effective leadership to AoA and now ACL during important transition times is nothing new to Edwin. He is very experienced at this. I also am pleased to recognize Trudy Gregorie, NAPSA's new executive director, who has succeeded Kathleen Quinn, who retired as executive director in August. Ms. Gregorie is here with us today.

NAPSA represents the nation's state and local Adult Protective Services (APS) programs. As a founding member of the Elder Justice Coalition and having played a major role in the shaping and enactment of the Elder Justice Act, we thank you for the unique role you have played in bringing together the impressive array of federal agencies engaged in combatting elder abuse in all its forms. While much of the promise of the Elder Justice Act remains just that, a promise, the Elder Justice Coordinating Council is a tangible and visible achievement of the Elder Justice Act. Your convening today is an important reminder of what has been achieved since you first convened in 2012 and also serves to put the spotlight on what more needs to be done.

APS is the nation's only system of state-based statutorily-authorized programs to investigate elder abuse, neglect and exploitation, and to respond to and protect its victims to the extent possible. Not only are vulnerable and older adults invisible, but to a large extent so is the primary system charged with protecting them. APS remains difficult to describe. It differs from state to state and sometimes from county to county. In the historical absence of federal leadership or resources, which we are now finally seeing, states have evolved their own systems, with their own definitions and standards. For example, APS programs are administratively fragmented, with about half residing in state units on aging; about half in state departments of social services, and a few in various other arrangements. Over 80% of states serve all persons with significant disabilities who are age 18 and older; while several serve only persons 60 or 65 and older, and some states can serve older persons without disabilities. All APS programs investigate abuse in home settings, where nine out of ten older persons live, but almost half also conduct abuse investigations in facilities. In about one-third of states, APS professionals work in other programs in addition to APS (aging services, e.g.)¹. All these variations have made it difficult to gather data; to describe APS in a succinct way; to explain to victims, the general public and allied professionals how and where to report suspected abuse; and to develop standards of practice and training.

While the focus of the EJCC and the Elder Justice Act is on elder abuse, it is important for us to note that in almost all states and communities, APS also responds to abused younger adults who have significant

¹ National Adult Protective Services Resource Center and National Council on Crime and Delinquency. *Evidence-Based Practices in Adult Protective Services: Survey Results*. 2012.

disabilities. APS exists to protect vulnerable adults who cannot protect themselves because of physical, cognitive or other serious impairment. While research continues to be desperately needed and other systems must also respond to what is truly an epidemic of elder abuse, APS is the keystone when discussing an adequate response system, especially for the vast majority of victims who live in their own homes and communities. As we noted in 2012, we must adequately and compassionately respond to those who are being victimized and suffering right now, while simultaneously working toward creating a more comprehensive and evidence-based response system for the future. APS is the primary system we have for doing that.

One of the noteworthy achievements over these past four years is the first appropriation of federal funds for “Elder Justice Activities” thus providing funding – albeit very modest amounts – for infrastructure support and demonstration projects for APS. Beginning with \$4 million in FY 2014 and \$8 million in FY 2015, the Administration for Community Living (ACL), under the leadership of former Administrator and Assistant Secretary for Aging Kathy Greenlee, and now Edwin Walker, has supported the development of the newly created data collection system for APS, the National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System (NAMRS), and provided funding on a discretionary basis to states to implement it. We hope that when the dust settles on funding for the current fiscal year (FY 2017) these efforts will continue and perhaps be enhanced if the Senate’s proposal to up the amount to \$10 million is adopted. The APS data system is a major milestone for APS and our ability to better understand the scope and impact of elder and other vulnerable adult abuse.

Another milestone achieved since 2012 has been the establishment of an Office of Elder Justice and Adult Protective Services at ACL. A major priority of NAPSA’s when we first began in work in helping to develop the EJA was to have such an office. We look forward to the naming of a director of this office. Another significant achievement by ACL is the adoption of a set of comprehensive recommended guidelines for states’ APS systems. NAPSA is gratified that these guidelines are modeled on the recommended minimum APS program guidelines established by NAPSA in 2013.

We also believe it is important to acknowledge the huge increased interest in and attention devoted to financial exploitation of the elderly over the past several years. Many of the agencies making up the EJCC are playing important roles in combatting financial abuse. NAPSA, as part of its annual conference, the only national conference devoted to elder and other vulnerable adult abuse, has included for the past seven years a “Summit” on Financial Exploitation. We are especially pleased that the financial services industry has become much more engaged in efforts to combat financial exploitation of the elderly, including their active involvement in, and support for, NAPSA’s Financial Exploitation Summit.

In particular, we applaud the adoption by the North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA) of a model act designed to protect vulnerable adults from financial exploitation, including allowing broker dealers or advisors to impose an initial delay of up to 15 days of disbursements from an account of an eligible adult if there is suspicion of financial exploitation. Mandated reporting to the state regulators and APS would also be required. The Financial Industry Regulatory Authority issued a similar proposed rule for broker-dealers. The SEC Investor Advocate reported to Congress that he believes financial firms “should have the ability to pause disbursement of funds, contrary to the instructions of a customer.” The Investor Advocate added, “If the suspicion is strong enough, it should trigger an obligation to report the suspicious activity to adult protective services.”

These, and others, are all noteworthy and important developments. But the bottom-line remains that the front-line workers in addressing elder abuse – state and local APS staff – are truly struggling on a

daily basis with increased abuse complaints, heavier and more complex caseloads, staffing reductions, reduced training opportunities and threats to the limited funding they operate under.

As we noted in 2012, research informs us that there are more elder abuse victims than the combined total of child abuse and domestic violence victims.² Yet, despite recent policy gains, older victims remain the only victim population for whom there is no designated federal support for intervention and services. We cannot emphasize enough that federal support and attention to other types of abuse have resulted in reduced incidences of both child abuse and domestic violence³.

APS continues to rely upon state and local funding. Despite the authorization of \$100 million in the Elder Justice Act for direct formula-grant funding to states to support their APS systems, not one penny has yet gone to states to support case workers and investigators. Fortunately, many states continue to direct a portion of their Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) funding to adult protective services. APS is one of 28 service categories that states may choose to use SSBG for, as is child protective services (CPS). In 2014, the most recent year for which we have data from the Administration for Children and Families at U.S. DHHS, 34 states use some SSBG funds for APS. APS currently accounts for 7% of all SSBG spending. In many states the pressures on those funds has only intensified since you first met, as states shift funds from APS to other services, including CPS. In fact, the amount of SSBG funding going to APS has dropped over 11% since FY 2009, the year we reported to you in our 2012 testimony, dropping from \$215,725,988 to \$191,048,216 in FY 2014. Very few states have seen an increase in state revenue going to APS to offset any reductions of their SSBG spending. At this time, when elder abuse reports and caseloads are going up, funding is going in the opposite direction. The chart below shows the number of states reporting to ACF using SSBG for APS and the total amounts of SSBG spent on APS between the years 2009 to 2014.

	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014
States using SSBG	34	34	34	36	36	34
SSBG Expenditures	\$215,725,988	\$180,371,648	\$194,592,281	\$203,330,386	\$187,821,429	\$191,048,216
Percentage of Total SSBG Expenditures	7.60%	6.40%	7.10%	7%	6.00%	7.00%

²Acierno, R., Hernandez, M. A., Amstadter, A. B., Resnick, H. S., Steve, K., Muzzy, W., & Kilpatrick, D. G. (2010). Prevalence and correlates of emotional, physical, sexual, neglectful, and financial abuse in the Congressional Record Feb. 10, 2003. [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/abuse_neglect/natl_incid/index.html](http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/R?r108:FLD001:S02121United States: The National Elder Mistreatment Study. American Journal of Public Health, 100, 292-297. Sedlak, A.J., Mettenburg, J., Basena, M., Petta, I., McPherson, K., Greene, A., and Li, S. (2010). Fourth National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (NIS-4): Report to Congress. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. <a href=). ONE DEPARTMENT: OVERVIEW of ACTIVITIES ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN 2008-2009. DHHS Office of Women’s Health <http://www.womenshealth.gov/owh/pub/violence-against-women.cfm>.

³ Dugan, L, Nagin, D & Rosenfeld, R. Do Domestic Violence Services Save Lives? NIJ Journal. ISSUE NO. 250 / NOVEMBER 2003

Moreover, in many states SSBG funding is used for a variety of other services that help APS clients with crucial needs and help them remain independent in their community. Such services among others include home-delivered meals, case management and in-home services. California, which does not use SSBG funds for APS, spends a significant amount on In-Home Supportive Services which can be a crucial service for vulnerable adults.

Despite the importance of SSBG to APS and to other service needs of elder and vulnerable adult abuse victims, SSBG remains under continuing threats for its very existence. From previous budget bills zeroing out SSBG in the House of Representatives to proposals in the Senate to fund other priority initiatives by taking all of SSBG for such purposes, SSBG's very existence is at risk. Make no mistake, elimination of SSBG would be catastrophic for many states' APS programs, several of which rely almost entirely on SSBG to fund their APS systems. States' APS administrators tell us that there is almost no likelihood of state legislatures coming up with new revenue to off-set the loss of SSBG. As much as we continue to advocate for Elder Justice Act appropriations to fund APS, NAPSA's top priority remains protecting SSBG. The EJA is aspirational. SSBG is essential.

The balance of our testimony provides an update on the key recommendations we offered the EJCC in 2012. At your first meeting we said, "While state and local APS investigators, case workers and others do the best they can to deal with an onslaught of difficult, complex and growing caseloads, they do so with virtually no national infrastructure behind them. There is no federal agency with responsibility for APS. There is no national data system, nor practice standards, nor minimal training standards." We noted at that time "87% of state APS programs report that the number of their reports and caseloads have gone up, while at the same time 48% report that their staff levels were reduced during the same time period." While these trends continue, there have been improvements since 2012, especially those driven by ACL. We do now have the beginnings of a national infrastructure with the creation of the Office of Elder Justice and Adult Protective Services, the development of the national APS data collection system and a national resource center devoted to assisting states in implementing the new system, the issuance of national guidelines for states' APS systems and the award of discretionary grants testing new approaches to addressing elder abuse and improved APS practice. ACL deserves a great deal of recognition for putting these initiatives into place with the very limited funding that they have received for these purposes.

We presented the following ten points to you in our 2012 statement which were based upon a White Paper we prepared for the EJCC. I repeat here each point from 2012 followed by our perspective on what has been achieved or changed over these past four years.

1. **2012:** There is a great need for support for research about the effectiveness of APS interventions, promising practices and optimal outcomes for victims. A not-yet-published paper from the joint research committee of NAPSA and the National Committee to Prevent Elder Abuse found only 44 "hypothesis-driven" studies involving APS over a 15 year period, and "very few" of those looked at the risks and benefits of APS interventions⁴. A recent and thorough survey, literature review and paper on evidence-based practices from NAPSRC's partner, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, "identified a handful of evidence-based practices" being utilized by APS across the country⁵.

⁴ Schillerstrom, et al. *Informing Evidence Based Practice: A Review of Research Analyzing Adult Protective Service (APS) Data*. Submitted for publication, 2012.

⁵ National Adult Protective Services Resource Center and National Council on Crime and Delinquency. *Evidence-Based Practices in*

2016 Update: The need for vastly increased research related to APS practice continues. NAPSA had the privilege of being the first ACL-funded National APS Resource Center (NAPSRC). As part of its work, NAPSA's NAPSRC conducted an on-going literature review to identify information published during 2014-2015 regarding risk and protective factors applicable to elder and vulnerable adult abuse victims and adult protective services policies and practices affecting victims. This search found 16 studies published in 2014-2015 that utilized APS client data or personnel, averaging eight studies per year. Despite an expanded research focus on APS cases, of the 37 research studies identified by the NAPSRC in 2014-2015, only five (14%) dealt specifically with APS, and of those, only three focused directly on APS practice. While four studies examining abuse and neglect intervention were found, none examined various APS interventions used or their effectiveness. None compared how different APS practices might affect rates at which clients become the subjects of repeat APS reports, nor did any look at whether the education and training levels of APS workers influenced their work. Not one study examined the effect caseload size has on client services, staff turnover rates, etc. Most importantly, none looked at the impact APS has on the people they serve; i.e. client outcomes. These are just a few of the areas that urgently need attention by researchers.

Vastly increased research attention to APS practices is essential to enable APS systems to develop and incorporate evidence-based practices in assessing and assisting vulnerable adults experiencing abuse and neglect.

2. **2012:** There is also a great need for the development and testing of field-friendly assessment and screening tools that can be used by APS. We know, for example, that common tools such as the Mini Mental Status Exam, in use by APS in 22 states, are not adequate to screen for financial and other types of capacity, especially given the recent research on mild cognitive impairment. The field needs new and easy-to-use tools that are not costly to states or local APS programs in terms of either time or money.

2016 Update: Various assessment tools are now being implemented in APS case work, some of which have been developed since 2012. Examples include the:

- *Tool for Risk, Interventions, and Outcomes (TRIO)* for use in APS, designed to facilitate consistent APS practice.
- Abuse -Intervention/Prevention Model (AIM) risk assessment tool for adults with dementia/caregiver dyads.
- Undue influence screening tools developed for APS line personnel by the California Courts (Mary Joy Quinn).
- Structured Decision Making (SDM) Model Assessment tool (NCCD).
- Lichtenberg Financial Decision Making Rating Scale (LFDRS) for assessing the financial decisional capacity of older adults.
- Capacity to consent assessment tools:

Adult Protective Services: Survey Results. 2012.

- The Assessment of Capacity for Everyday Decision making (ACED)
- Memory Impairment Screening (MIS)
- Short Portable Mental Status Questionnaire

We also want to note that NAPSA has worked with the San Diego State University, School of Social Work, MASTER Program to develop APS training modules on “Risk Assessment” and “Assessing Client Capacity” in both classroom and e-learning versions.

3. **2012:** It is imperative that a national data system be developed, tested and implemented that will be capable of annually telling us how many cases are reported to APS; what types of abuse those cases allege; how many are substantiated after investigation; the age, gender, living arrangement, cognitive and other impairments, etc. of the victims; the age, gender, cognitive and other impairments, and the relationship to the victim, of the abusers; what interventions are put into place; why the cases are closed and other basic data. Such an effort will require identifying the essential common data elements and learning from those states that do have their own strong centralized automated data systems, including Texas and Illinois. One challenge will be the fact that the majority of APS data systems are integrated into other systems such as child protective services.

2016 Update: A huge accomplishment noted earlier is ACL’s development of the National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System, or NAMRS, to collect data from the nation’s APS systems. NAPSA is proud to have played a key role in the development of this system and continues to work with WRMA to help states implement it. In August, ACL awarded “two-year grants to enhance statewide APS systems, improve practices and data collection and interface with ACL’s NAMRS.”⁶

4. **2012:** NAPSA worked closely with California’s Project MASTER at San Diego State University to develop the NAPSA-identified 23 core competency modules for use in training their state’s APS personnel. The modules, which are based on the latest research and have all been piloted and evaluated, are now developed. The topics range from initial investigation, sexual and physical abuse, neglect, self-neglect and financial exploitation to case planning and case closure. Resources are now needed to adapt the California modules into a nationally accessible, web-based training and certification program which can be utilized by every state and by every APS professional. This step would go a long way to standardizing not only APS training but also APS practices across the US.

2016 Update: Since 2012, almost all the core competency modules have been converted to e-learning, and several states have adopted one or more of the modules for their own training programs. Modules for supervisor training have also been created. In addition, NAPSA was awarded a grant from the Archstone Foundation to develop a national APS certificate program based on the core competencies. The groundwork for the program has been laid, and the certificate initiative will be rolled out in the next few months. Individual APS professionals will be able to obtain certificates after completing and passing the entire course, and states or counties can elect to obtain certificates for all their workers. Eventually, “badges” will be awarded for completion of subsets of the modules; e.g. an investigator may receive a badge for having taken and passed the modules on a specific topic such as financial exploitation or sexual abuse.

⁶ ACL press release, August 16, 2016.

5. **2012:** Ensure that victim services funds (e.g., VOCA, VAWA, FVPSA) are allocated to older victims in proportion to their numbers and needs, and be sure that older and vulnerable adult victims, and victim response systems, are represented in all planning and programmatic decision-making. Older victims of abuse are underrepresented by these other victim services' programs both in terms of the dollars allocated and in the services provided.

2016 Update: We are very pleased that the President's commitment made at the 2015 White House Conference on Aging to clarify that victims of elder abuse are an underserved victim population for purposes of VOCA funding was carried out through the issuance of the VOCA final rule on August 8. We believed this was already the case but the new final rule makes that clear. We also note that the new rule makes clear that VOCA funds can be used for legal services for elderly victims of abuse. Civil legal services are crucial for many victims of elder abuse. We are very grateful to the staff of the Department of Justice for the clarity of the final rule. Of course, the potential of VOCA to support APS in providing services to victims of elder abuse remains to be seen. We are optimistic that states' VOCA administrators will recognize the legitimate needs of elder victims of abuse by providing funding to address their needs.

We also hope that VAWA funds will be directed to support the far too many older women who are victims of violence. It is shameful that they do not receive the support of VAWA in a way that even modestly reflects their needs. While one in four adult women in the US are currently over age 60, only minuscule amounts are devoted to their services by the domestic violence and sexual assault networks.

6. **2012:** We also believe that federal employees and contractors in federally funded systems and programs that interact with older adults, especially those who employ large numbers of mandated reporters, should be educated about elder and vulnerable adult abuse and about APS – what its authority is and when it should be called upon. The Veteran's Administration is one example of such a system. Moreover, APS clients – that is, victims of abuse – should be considered a priority class for federally-funded services (e.g., aging and disability services, housing). This could be accomplished through administrative guidance provided by the Executive Branch or through federal law.

2016 Update: With respect to educating federal employees and contractors who interact with older adults, we are unaware of any progress that has been made in ensuring this. We were disappointed that the recent reauthorization of the Older Americans Act did not include a provision establishing that older victims of abuse are considered a priority class for federally-funded services. We think it just makes sense that a victim of abuse should go to the front of the line for service that may help protect them from further abuse or enable them to maintain independence in their community. This will be a priority for us in the next Older Americans Act reauthorization.

7. **2012:** There is a particular need to strengthen the Aging Services and Disabilities Services Networks' partnerships with APS at the state and local levels, especially with respect to providing emergency and temporary services for victims, screening for abuse and reporting suspected abuse. We believe every effort should be made to encourage or even require funded entities to work with the appropriate state or local APS program. We believe the aging services networks need to be better educated about recognizing, reporting and responding to elder abuse (and non-elder adult abuse). With 47 states having mandatory reporting laws, the aging services network, along with many others, need to be trained about their obligations and what more they can do when encountering victims of abuse.

2016 Update: NAPSA is very pleased that the long-awaited reauthorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA), which occurred earlier this year, includes a provision requiring that personnel working under OAA programs are to receive training regarding elder abuse. Specifically, this amendment states, “The Assistant Secretary shall, as appropriate, ensure that programs authorized under this Act include appropriate training in the prevention of abuse, neglect, and exploitation and provision of services that address elder justice and the exploitation of older individuals.” Getting this into the OAA amendments wasn’t a sure bet so we are very happy to see it in the final version of the reauthorization.

To help ensure that this new provision is more than just another nice idea, NAPSA is creating an “Elder Abuse 101” training program that can be used by all programs that operate under the OAA, as well as other services that are part of the Aging Services Network. At minimum, it will help those who work in aging services to recognize the possibility of abuse among those they serve and know what can be done if they suspect the possibility of abuse. This training will be available to programs as diverse as home-delivered and congregate meal programs, case management services, home care and caregiver-based programs, as well as the SHIP program, RSVP along with many other services. We need an army of caring individuals prepared to step in to assist the millions of victims of elder and vulnerable adult abuse. There is no greater army available than the aging services network. Such training will also be made available to the disabilities services network.

8. **2012:** APS partners routinely coordinate with law enforcement and the criminal justice system. But much more must be done to strengthen the hand of police, prosecutors and judges to adequately respond to elder abuse and to work with their corresponding APS systems. We believe it is important to expand training for law enforcement, prosecutors and judges beyond VAWA-defined crimes to all forms of elder and vulnerable adult abuse, and to make the training widely and easily available throughout the country. While not all elder abuse is criminal in nature, the abuse that is needs to be thoroughly investigated and prosecuted.

2016 Update: State and local APS administrators tell us that there has been considerable improvement in collaboration between APS and law enforcement and prosecutors. But a great deal more needs to be done to engage law enforcement, prosecutors and the judiciary in treating elder and vulnerable adult abuse with the seriousness it merits and requires. Fortunately, the Department of Justice, through the work of Andy Mao and others, is providing essential leadership and as a result, important progress is being made. The DOJ-led initiative to create an Elder Justice Roadmap to guide us across many the many dimensions of elder abuse and to engage and galvanize all those who have a stake in and role to play in combatting elder abuse is noteworthy. The DOJ’s “Elder Justice Initiative” website now provides terrific resources including sample pleadings, documents, statutes and prosecutor training videos, elder abuse training resources and protocols for law enforcement, webinars and trainings, information about where to report elder abuse and much more.⁷

We are also pleased that S. 3270, the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act⁸, legislation which addresses elder abuse and the role of DOJ and the Federal Trade Commission, has been reported out of the Judiciary Committee in the Senate. NAPSA hopes this legislation will continue to move forward in the Senate and do the same in the House. Among the legislation’s various provisions is one of particular importance to APS. As passed out of the Judiciary Committee it would provide congressional approval of

⁷ <https://www.justice.gov/elderjustice/>

⁸ <https://www.judiciary.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/S.%203270%20Substitute%20Amendment%20-%20ALB16846.pdf>

APS and other agencies to enter into mutually cooperative agreements with their counterparts in other states.⁹ Such “interstate compacts” would allow cooperation across state lines when clients move, for example. Approval of such interstate compacts is a priority of NAPSA and we are hopeful that Congress will allow these essential agreements between states.

9. **2012:** As I noted earlier, Assistant Secretary Greenlee is to be applauded for her decision to fund the first-ever National APS Resource Center. It provides an essential vehicle for information exchange and mutual education among state and local APS programs, through producing urgently needed information, such as the report on APS I mentioned earlier, through frequent webinars and disseminated materials on research and training topics needed by the field, through a monthly newsletter and by responding to frequent requests for information and technical assistance by both programs and individuals. It is an important step toward building a modest national infrastructure to support and strengthen APS. This center needs to be an on-going part of the federal response to elder abuse.

2016 Update: A key part of former ACL Administrator Greenlee’s legacy of commitment to Elder Justice and APS was her decision to fund the first-ever National APS Resource Center. The establishment of a national APS resource center was a priority of NAPSA’s from the opening bell of the campaign to create and enact into law the Elder Justice Act. NAPSA was therefore honored to be selected to develop the National APS Resource Center. While NAPSA is not presently the prime contractor for the second iteration of the Center, which is now operated by WRMA, which led the way in creating the new national APS data collection system with NAPSA as a partner, we are pleased to be part of the current resource center team. With an understandable focus on helping states to implement the new APS system, now that it has been created, we believe it is equally important to continue the provision of direct technical assistance to state APS systems to improve APS practice and outcomes. NAPSA is proud of the TA services it provided during its tenure running the Center especially in our effectiveness in:

- Identifying APS best practices, and compiling and disseminating the “lessons learned,” and
- Providing targeted TA in implementing best practices to APS administrators through multiple methods.

We believe a great deal was accomplished by NAPSA during its four-year period of implementing the new Center and operationalizing it. In the latter two years, the Center’s evaluation plan was lauded as a model for all resource centers by ACL. NAPSA exceeded the goals set forth in the plan by 132% to 148%, with one exception, where 93% of the goal was met. Examples of what was achieved during that time, among many others, include:

- Creating the first national elder abuse/APS multi-disciplinary team.
- Producing and disseminating the first-ever APS TA briefs on such topics as “Investigation Protocols,” “Clinical Issues in Supervising APS Practice,” “Evidence-based APS practices,” “HIPAA Implications for APS,” and others. As part of our testimony we are providing a list of the Issue briefs.
- Issuing major reports on research applicable to APS practice and APS innovative practices.

⁹ The US Constitution prohibits states from entering into agreements without prior Congressional approval. Virtually every social service and criminal justice system (child protective services, corrections, etc.) has such compacts in place.

- Providing monthly calls for state administrators on topics they identified they needed help with.
- Providing in-depth, hands-on, highly focused TA to 12 state APS systems on critical issues each individual state identified. An example was Indiana's request for NAPSA's assistance in "Redesigning our APS program from a law enforcement to a case management focus and addressing our need for clinical placements." In Nevada it was help in "Working with clients and alleged perpetrators with mental illness."
- A total of 14 states implemented concrete program improvements as a result of Center involvement.
- 100% of responding APS state administrators stated that the Center was valuable or extremely valuable to them in their work.

The provision of direct targeted TA to state and local APS is vital and its importance increases daily as APS struggles with circumstances as described by one state APS administrator, "We are underfunded and understaffed. Our workers do all functions: intake, report screening, report investigation, and have insufficient time to do it all. Our staff is stressed and swamped." We urge that such efforts resume and that they be provided by those with deep experience and expertise in APS.

10. **2012:** And, finally, we remain thrilled by the enactment of the Elder Justice Act as part of the Affordable Care Act. But the great promise of the new law, especially the authorized support for states and communities as they attempt to keep their APS systems reasonably responsive to the growing demand for their services, is unfulfilled in the absence of appropriations.

2016 Update: I have already addressed this earlier in my remarks. For the effective performance of the labor- and expertise-intensive service that is APS, the bottom-line is, well, the bottom-line. Programs must have the funding to support investigators, case workers and the many others essential to responding to the ever-growing and increasingly complex cases of elder and vulnerable abuse. Six years after enactment of the Elder Justice Act there is still no dedicated federal funding going to states for APS. That was the center-piece of the EJA and it remains utterly unrealized. Moreover, there is but one source of federal funding and that is the Social Services Block Grant. While SSBG is not a formula-grant program to states as the EJA is intended to be, many states do opt to use some portion of their SSBG to fund APS. It is the "life-blood" of APS in a number of these states. That is why preserving, much less increasing, SSBG funding is NAPSA's top priority. We need the on-going engagement of all of you to help ensure SSBG remains a critical source of state funding for APS as well as other services, such as case management, to help abuse victims remain as independent as possible.

It is also goes without saying – but must be said, the Elder Justice Act must be reauthorized.

Thank you for this opportunity to come before you again to not only recognize the many good successes of the past four years with respect to Elder Justice and APS specifically, but also to call attention to all that remains to be done to have a reasonably adequate national system of state and local response to elder and vulnerable adult abuse. It is in our communities where each day thousands of elders and other vulnerable adults are victimized by abuse, neglect and exploitation. NAPSA will continue to work closely with the EJCC and each of its member agencies and offices in furthering the federal response to the nightmare of elder abuse.