

## NAPSA Advocacy Toolkit

Questions? Contact: : Bill Benson ([bill.benson@napsa-now.org](mailto:bill.benson@napsa-now.org)) or Kendra Kuehn ([kendra.kuehn@napsa-now.org](mailto:kendra.kuehn@napsa-now.org))

Now is the time to ask Congress to fund APS via the Elder Justice Act (([42 U.S.C. 1397m-1\(b\)](#)). NAPSA urges Congress to at least provide appropriations of \$15 million for grants to directly support APS program operations and \$11 million for development of the National APS Training Center, the National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System, innovation grants, and other systems support. This would be level funding from FY2023 and is a part of the current Senate appropriations proposal.

**We need to tell Congress why funding for APS is a critical part of the FFY 2024 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill. Ask your Congressional delegation, especially Senators, to support this funding.** Help send a message to Congress that APS needs to be a part of yearly funding considerations not just during an emergency. Consider passing the message on to other colleagues and to your own agency's government affairs team. We need to get the message out.

You can find your Representative here: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative> and your Senators here: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm>. You can also email or call Congress here: [Email a message or make a phone call](#). Voice your thoughts through contacts you have, their contact form, by calling their DC office, and by calling their district office.

### Key Points:

- Federal funding for APS needs to be part of the regular appropriations process to build infrastructure and capacity.
- Funding should allow for diversity of programs, including bifurcated systems (separate APS programs for older adults and adults under 60 with disabilities), and funding for tribal APS programs.
- Encourage your Representative and Senators to support the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

Keep your message to the point and tailor to your experience as much as possible.

- Let them know who you are and that you are a constituent (a resident of the state).
- Tell them what APS is and who you serve. Let them know that ongoing funding for APS is a critical need. Elaborate on why it is important to you and your clients. Be sure to share impact, data, and stories of what the new funding has meant. Share what would happen if the funding stopped.
  - Administrators and managers: consider elaborating on specific parts of the strategic plan you are developing, what outcomes/impact you have seen, any data, and the impact of not continuing this level of funding.
  - Field staff and investigators: talk about how APS impacts your community and clients. What is the direct impact of funding on you and your work? What would happen if it was not continued?

- Partners and friends of APS: talk about what you see as the impact of APS with those you work with and how funding would help.
- Ask your Representative & Senators to support the Senate bill and increase the funding level.
- Say thank you!

NAPSA encourages you, APS partners, family, and friends to contact your Congressional delegation. Hearing from constituents make the biggest impression. You can also consider letters to the editor or other opinion pieces.

Let us know what you are doing and sharing so NAPSA can elevate your efforts.

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## ***Benefits of Federal Funding for Adult Protective Services***

In 2023, the National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) asked members about the impact of direct federal funding on Adult Protective Services (APS) and what they want Congress to know. Members described how funding has helped intervene in abuse, neglect, and exploitation while fostering the independence of clients. One territory reported that it was because of the funding that they were able to start an APS program. Loss of funding would mean the services described below may be discontinued.

- **Direct Support.** A majority of programs used funding to directly support critical client needs. While often small amounts, these efforts address and prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation as well as helping adults stay in their community. Initiatives included:
  - Deep cleaning services
  - Food and nutrition support
  - Transportation support
  - Home repair including chair lifts
  - Emergency housing support
  - Basic needs such as clothing, bedding, and kitchen utensils
- **Workforce.** To fully address and prevent maltreatment of older adults and persons with disabilities we must invest in the workforce out in the field and support them in a difficult and often dangerous job. Initiatives included:
  - Additional staff and overtime pay
  - Recruitment
  - Training
  - Experts such as forensic accountants and neuropsychologists.
- **Public Awareness.** Abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults and people with disabilities is an overlooked and underreported problem. Programs have used federal funding to build public awareness of this issue and its detrimental effects on the community. Initiatives included:
  - Billboards
  - PSAs
  - Awareness campaigns
- **Efficiency and Effectiveness.** Upgrading data systems and technology allows programs to report and utilize improved data. Upgrading systems allowed workers to be more efficient in their investigations and case management and programs are better able to target innovations. Initiatives included:
  - Case management system upgrades and enhancements
  - Improved data collection and dashboards
  - Upgraded technology to allow workers for efficiency in the field

### **APS Calls to Congress:**

*“None of these people would have been helped without these funds. ... There are so many needed things with no other program to fill this gap.”*

*“One care package recipient accepted her package and exclaimed ‘I know there is a God because you are here!’”*

*“This funding demonstrates that Congress understands the importance of the work done in APS programs across the country.”*

*“This funding is one of the most positive and beneficial funding streams used in the department.”*

*“Vulnerable adult abuse, neglect and exploitation is an epidemic and our relatively small forces stand for vulnerable and senior adults. Support us. Fund us.”*