



ASSOCIATED GOVERNMENTS  
OF NORTHWEST COLORADO

March 5, 2015

The Honorable Cory Gardner  
Senate Dirksen Office Building SD-B40B  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Gardner:

On behalf of the Area Agency on Aging serving Northwestern Colorado and those serving other seniors in Colorado, we would like to thank you for placing a hold on S. 192 the Reauthorization of the Older American Act. The Act, as it currently stands, penalizes Colorado for growth in senior population by using a funding formula that uses 13-year-old data to allocate funds. Funding cuts from sequestration unfairly impact Colorado as a result of the old data and funding formula as well.

We know that you understand how important it is to provide services to the aging population in Colorado and what a devastating effect the passage of S. 192 would be to seniors across the state. Under the reauthorization bill, Colorado seniors could face cuts of 15% or more in services designed to keep seniors healthier and in their homes longer. These cuts could force some seniors into assisted living facilities under the Medicaid program which is infinitely more expensive than continued sponsorship of the programs facing budget cuts. Colorado's senior population has grown significantly putting even more pressure on programs funded through the Aging Act.

It seems logical that a more appropriate answer to the dilemma would be to exempt the Older American Act from cuts as part of the sequester much like Social Security and Medicaid have been exempted. We ask that you support a course of action that will fund Colorado seniors based on an updated funding formula that takes into account the increased senior population of the state. We further ask that you support an exemption of the Older American Act from sequestration. It just does not make sense to force seniors into a more expensive program like Medicaid when their quality of life can be much more enriched through more efficient efforts such as those services provided through the Older American Act.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. Please contact us if you have any questions regarding the concerns of our members.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mike Samson in black ink.

Mike Samson  
Chairman

Handwritten signature of Jeff Eskelson in black ink.

Jeff Eskelson  
Vice-Chairman

Handwritten signature of Martin Chazen in black ink.

Martin Chazen  
Treasurer

Copy to: Senator Michael Bennet

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