

Older Americans Act

The Older Americans Act (OAA) was passed in 1965 and represented a major governmental attempt to address the problems of senior citizens.

Poverty, poor nutrition, lack of transportation, inadequate housing, age discrimination, limited knowledge, poor medical care, inadequate health insurance, and elder abuse were among the problem areas that were identified.

The OAA, was enacted to provide a range of programs that offered opportunities and services to Older Americans, especially those at risk of losing their independence.

The programs and services that are established are intended to assist older people in obtaining

- Adequate income in retirement
- Suitable housing
- Institutional or long-term care
- Opportunity for employment
- A wide range of civic, cultural, educational and recreational activities
- Low cost transportation
- Freedom, independence and initiative and protection against abuse, neglect and exploitation

Congress reviews the provisions of the Act and makes periodic modifications.

As a result the OAA has been amended and reauthorized sixteen times, with the last revision occurring in 2006.

The OAA amendments of 2006 outline the services to be provided for the next five years but congress must appropriate federal funding to support the act every year.