**URGENT: Threats to the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)**

The 119th Congress is underway and is imminently considering deep cuts through a process called reconciliation (learn more: <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/explainer/budget-reconciliation-simplified/>). **A key threat to Adult Protective Services is the call for elimination of the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG).**

A majority of APS programs utilize SSBG, including some states that fully fund APS through SSBG. It also funds many services clients rely on to remain in their home and communities including meals, case management, and transportation. Congress needs to know the impact of SSBG and that it is a significant, non-duplicative source of funding. This is a great opportunity to share data and stories.

**It is critical that Congress hears from you about how important SSBG is to older adults and people with disabilities.**

**Key Message: As Congress makes budget reconciliation decisions law makers must oppose the inclusion of cuts to SSBG in any bill.**

**Act Now!**

The timeline is short and NAPSA members need to engage now:

* Call or email your Senators and Representatives through the **NAPSA Action Center** (<https://bit.ly/PROTECTSSBG>). **Calls are the most effective.**
* Visit your Senators’ or Representatives district office. You can find addresses on their website.
* Ensure SSBG is a priority for your county and state government. Work through your agency to encourage state legislators to reach out to Congress. Ask the Governor’s office to champion the importance of SSBG.
* Reach out to your partners (see template for suggested language). Think creatively!
	+ Do the services in your area that benefit from SSBG know what is at risk? Who do you rely on? Reach out to meals programs, transportation services, and others.
	+ Do key constituency in your state know about the danger? Reach out to state AARP, coalitions, disability advocacy groups, and other key players.
	+ Do you know anyone with a connection to your Senators or Representatives? Think about your legislative liaisons, boards and advisory groups, supportive businesses, retired directors and administrators, and others.

You can find your House Representatives [here](http://www.house.gov/representatives/) and your Senators [here](https://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm?OrderBy=state&Sort=ASC). Be sure to include your address or let them know where you are located so that they know you are a constituent!

If you need any assistance, suggestions, or more information contact NAPSA (Kendra Kuehn, Policy Analyst). Share your efforts with NAPSA so we can amplify them through the SSBG Coalition.

**Telephone Call and Office Visit Talking Points**

* Introduce yourself and identify your location if you are a constituent.

*Example: Good morning, I’m Kendra calling from McLean, Virginia.*

* Tell them you are reaching out regarding the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) and concerns on elimination.

*Example: I’m calling today about calls for the elimination of the Social Services Block Grant in reconciliation.*

* Identify why APS is important to you and be prepared to explain what APS does.

*Example: As a policy advisor for the National Adult Protective Services and a long-time Virginian, I have seen the importance of this program across the country and the dedication of APS staff. In Virginia, APS receives and investigates reports of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults and people with disabilities.*

* Highlight the importance of SSBG to your program and the impact of any funding cuts.

*Example: SSBG supports a significant portion of the Virginia APS budget as well as those across the country. Without this funding services would need to be cut and older adults and people with disabilities may enter more costly and unnecessary services such as nursing homes.*

* Ask the office to oppose the elimination of SSBG in any reconciliation bill.

*Example: I urge the Congressman to oppose any cuts to the Social Services Block Grant in a reconciliation bill.*

*Thank your for your time.*

**Email Template – Customize with data and impact stories.**

Dear ,

I write to express my deep concern with proposals to cut the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) which provides critical funding for a majority of Adult Protective Services (APS) programs and supports services to vulnerable older adults and people with disabilities. SSBG is a proven and irreplaceable support across the nation representing the majority of federal funding to APS.

Elimination of SSBG would require funding replacement by states, reduced services and resources, and/or increased response times. Alternatives with negative impact on APS and its clients. Older adults and people with disabilities experiencing abuse, neglect, and exploitation are already at an increased risk of health problems or even death. Decreasing funding to a critical program such as APS only increases long-term health costs.

I urge you to oppose the inclusion of cuts to SSBG in any reconciliation bill. It is essential to our national effort to combat abuse, neglect, and exploitation and support justice for our most vulnerable citizens that we preserve the Social Services Block Grant.

Thank you for your support.

**Partner and Ally Outreach Template**

* Introduce yourself and how APS (you) and partner work together (if needed)

*Example: Hi (Partner’s name) - This is Nancy reaching out. We partnered on several events prior to my retirement from NC Adult Protective Services. I’m reaching out on concerns around APS funding in Congress.*

* Reason for writing

*Example: Is NC AARP aware of the potential for Congress to do away with Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) funding? As a former APS director and NAPSA member I am deeply concerned about the impact this would have on North Carolinians.*

* Explanation of SSBG, its importance globally and what it specifically means for our state/community.

*Example: SSBG is a significant source of funding for adult protective services in NC as well as nearly half of all states' APS programs. SSBG funds are federal dollars that come to all states through a formula. States decide how the money will be spent for 29 categories of social services type programs, such as Adult Protective Services and Child Protective Services.*

*SSBG may also fund services supporting older adults such as home delivered meals and in home support services. In NC, SSBG is provided to all 100 county departments of social services to help fund these statutorily mandated services. You may recall that NC APS is funded with SSBG and county budget funds. The NC legislature authorizes no state funds for the provision of APS services.*

* How your partner can help

*Example: I'm collaborating with the National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) to get APS programs and partners across the country involved with education and advocacy on the likely elimination loss of SSBG funds during the Congressional budget reconciliation (learn more on reconciliation -* [*https://bipartisanpolicy.org/explainer/budget-reconciliation-simplified/*](https://bipartisanpolicy.org/explainer/budget-reconciliation-simplified/)*). There is also a campaign to contact US Senators and Representatives to educate them on SSBG and urge them to oppose any proposal of elimination. The loss of SSBG would be disastrous for APS, older adults and people with disabilities.*

*If AARP is already in the thick of this fight, could you let me know how? If AARP isn't in the thick of this fight to preserve these funds, would you like to have more information? I'd be glad to provide information and connect you with NAPSA.*

*Hope to hear from you soon.*