

Reauthorize the Older Americans Act with Changes to the Funding Formula

THE PROBLEM

Older Adult Hunger in Colorado Continues to Grow

COLORADO SENIORS FACE THE QUESTION:



Older adults on fixed incomes often have to make choices like “Do I purchase food or medicine?” even after working most of their adult life. In Colorado, this may be a common dilemma for nearly one of seven adults over the age of 60, who struggle to have enough food to fuel their minds and bodies.

Food-insecure seniors are 40 percent more likely to experience congestive heart failure, twice as likely to develop asthma and 60 percent more likely to experience depression.¹ While the number of older Coloradans has climbed steadily over the last decade, along with those at risk of hunger, the funding to food programs that work to mitigate the increasing rate of food insecurity among older adults has not.

THE POLICIES

Nutrition In the Older Americans Act

“Seniors need more help to feel important instead of disappear.”

—Leslie

Senior Congregate Meal Participant

The Older Americans Act (OAA) provides funding for two nutrition programs, congregate and home-delivered meals, to support older adults (persons who are 60 years or older), specifically the 13.29 percent of older adults in Colorado who experience the threat of hunger.²

Congregate meal sites provide nutritious meals to older adults in a social, community setting. These meal sites may be sponsored at older adult housing buildings, recreation centers and other community organizations. Home-delivered meals are provided for homebound older adults. Both meal programs must meet federal nutrition guidelines for older adults.

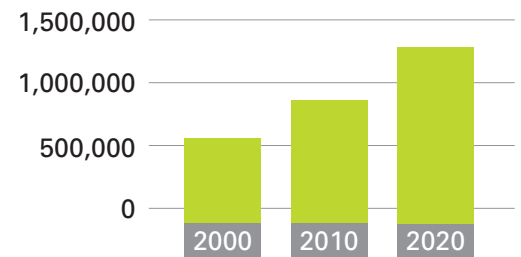
Sequestration Cuts and Hold Harmless effects

Colorado’s Funds Cut From 2012 to 2013



Colorado had the fourth highest percent change of population age 65 years and over from 2000 to 2010.³ As a result of Colorado’s older adult population, the use of the 2000 census numbers for sequestration calculations and the application of the hold harmless provision of the OAA, Colorado received disproportional cuts to the OAA nutrition programs. With sequestration, Colorado took a 6.87 percent cut in Congregate Meal Program funding, while other states with lower older adult population growth received smaller or no cuts. From 2012 to 2013, Colorado’s funding cut was \$858,174.

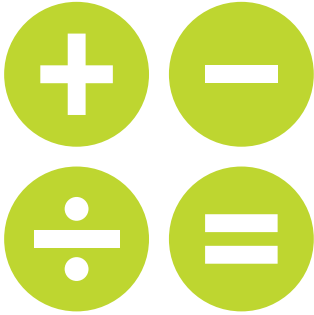
Colorado Older Adult Population Growth ⁴



None of the 13 states with zero-dollar cuts were rated among the 15 states with the most increase in older adult population. For example, Iowa saw an older adult population growth of less than four percent but did not receive any sequestration cuts to the Congregate Meal Program.

THE SOLUTION

Change Funding Formulas to Better Serve Older Coloradans



Colorado's federal delegation needs to ensure that the Older Americans Act nutrition funding formulas are changed to provide our state with appropriate federal funding.

With our fair share of the federal funding, Colorado will be able to better serve our growing older adult population with the nutritious food needed to maintain healthy, independent lifestyles. The hold harmless provision needs to be phased out to meet the needs of our growing older adult population, and the 2010 census numbers must be utilized for funding allocations.

It is time to reauthorize the Older Americans Act, which has been sitting untouched since 2006. However, before voting for reauthorization, Colorado's federal delegation needs to ensure that the Older Americans Act nutrition funding formulas are changed to provide our state with appropriate federal funding.

MORE INFO

Info@HungerFreeColorado.org or 720-328-1284



Hunger Free Colorado is the state's leading anti-hunger organization leveraging the power of collaboration, systems change, policy change and social change to end hunger in Colorado.

HungerFreeColorado.org

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SUPPORT

Organizations in Support of Ending Hold Harmless



¹ *Spotlight on Senior Health: adverse health outcomes of food insecure older Americans* (2013). Feeding America and The National Foundation to End Senior Hunger. Available: http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/-/media/Files/research/FeedingAmerica_SpotlightOnSeniorHealth_3182014.ashx?.pdf

² Ziliak J., & Gunderson, C. *State of Senior Hunger in America 2012* (National Foundation to End Senior Hunger, May 2014). <http://www.nfesh.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/State-of-Senior-Hunger-in-America-2012.pdf>

³ Werner, C. (2011). *The older population: 2010*. U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved from: <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-09.pdf>.

⁴ Colorado State Demography Office; *Colorado Population by County, Age, Race, and Gender 2000, 2010, 2020*; generated by Dinah Frey; using < https://dola.colorado.gov/demog_webapps/pagCategory.jsf>; (7 July 2014).