

OLDER AMERICANS ACT REAUTHORIZATION INPUT FOR INDIVIDUALS

Input from individuals may be submitted by downloading and mailing this form. Such input may be recorded as topic area recommendations (Section I) or may be specific to particular citations of the current OAA (Section II). If you have questions regarding submittal of input you may contact Abbe Lackmeyer, 866-598-0102, linscoae@muohio.edu. Mailing address is provided at the bottom of this form.

Provide the following information:

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Check the organization/group(s) you represent:

State Unit on Aging
 Area Agency on Aging
 OAA Service Provider
 Tribal Organization
 Advocacy Agency
 Older Adult
 Caregiver
 Other: Please list _____

SECTION I. TOPIC AREAS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: Check the topic(s) you want to address

Caregivers (includes but not limited to National Family Caregiver Support Program)

DESCRIBE SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THIS TOPIC AREA(S):

To begin with the Topics List that you have here; when you refer to caregivers, you are primarily talking about a younger person caring for an older person. I would like to request that you add a topic of Kin Caregiver which would refer to a older person caring for a related child. The impact and increase of the elderly having to care for small children in today's society is very profound. They do it because of the love for their related children and if they didn't the Foster Care System would be much worse and families would be even more broken. Family connection is necessary for the elderly and the children and it is not an option. Approximately 2.4 million grandparents were Kinship caregiving as recorded by the 2000 US Census Bureau data. This means that they are the primary caregivers of children under 18 years old. This number doesn't include the elderly aunts, uncles, older cousins, older siblings and near kins caring for related children. It further reports 3.5 million reside with their grandparent as head of household. This is part of the nearly 6 million children total that live with relatives nationwide. This phenomenal number is caused by the number of birth parents that are involved with drugs or alcohol, incarcerated, mentally ill, deceased or just out doing their own thing. And for the first time in our history we are deploying both military enlisted parents into the war zones which means that their children remain stateside with grandparents or other relatives. All of this means that the Older Americans Act must include both systemic and financial support specifically for the elderly caring for minor children. Many of whom are on fixed income, have transportation and health challenges, and need moral support just to cope with the changing trends and technologies of today's world. Legislation and supportive funding must be allocated to support these blended families.

RATIONALE FOR SUGGESTED CHANGE(S):

It is ludicrous for our society and our government to send a parent to jail or to war and not make provisions for their children. We must be better stewards of our children who are our future than that. Grandparents and other relatives take in their related children because they love them and they want them to stay connected to the family, the culture and the community. There is a **Tanzanian Proverb** that says; ***There is always room for the people you love, even if the house is crowded.***