

**Clay Kempf**  
**On Behalf of California Association of Area Agencies on Aging**  
**Testimony for AoA OAA Reauthorization**  
**March 3, 2010**  
**San Francisco, California**

On behalf of the California Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A), I would like to encourage OAA reauthorization to continue to embrace the philosophy of local program design and priority setting. **C4A recommends expanding the Act's flexibility to allow funds to be transferred between all titles, including IIID and IIIE, making it more consistent with Titles IIIB & IIIC.** This is particularly critical to AAA's providing service in rural communities, where funding allocations in some titles such as IIID is limited. These small allocations limit opportunities for meaningful service delivery. Inter-title transferability will allow additional funds to be allocated for local projects that have been identified as high priority and effective. In the absence of quality services in any particular category, increased transferability provides the opportunity to re-allocate funding to address local needs rather than force it to be spent on an unproductive service model.

**C4A's top priority is to add language to impose a Federal mandate of state payment to Area Agencies on Aging and their service providers regardless of existence of a state budget impasse.** California's budget battles are leaving our Older Americans Act programs hamstrung while our federal dollars are held hostage.

State legislation has been proposed on numerous occasions to remedy this situation, and each attempt has failed more spectacularly than the last. As the state legislators become more and more familiar with the issue, each party uses it as a means to attack the other, citing seniors as an example of harm being done by budget delays, and blaming the other party for these delays. Consequently, Older Americans Act funding gets switched from providing essential funds for seniors into a tool for political bashing.

AAA's and their service providers are forced to utilize lines of credit in order to keep doors open and services operating. Interest payments on these credit lines results in cuts to services. Services are minimized each summer during these delays, bills go unpaid, and the entire operation of programs is compromised.

During hard economic times, state budgets can be delayed not for a few weeks, but for months, putting AAA's and their service providers in impossible situations. Language mandating the payment of federal OAA funds will protect seniors from suffering during these challenging times, and will insure that OAA funding will be used to deliver critical services rather than as a tool to deliver partisan political messages.