


REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

DATE: August 20, 2013

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Gerry F. Miller 
Chief Legislative Analyst

Council File No.: 13-0002-S76

Assignment No.: 13-05-0433

SUBJECT: Resolution to support and/or sponsor legislation and/or administrative action to re-instate the Older Americans Act funding that has been reduced as a result of federal sequestration.

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt attached Resolution to include in the City's 2013-14 Federal Legislative Program SPONSORSHIP and/or SUPPORT of legislation and/or administrative action that would reinstate Older Americans Act funding that has been reduced as a result of sequestration.

SUMMARY

The Resolution (Koretz – Rosendahl) states that the Department of Aging relies on various funding sources, which include federal Older Americans Act funds, to provide services to the City's senior population. The Older Americans Act, a federal statute enacted in 1965, provides approximately \$14 million annually to allow the Department to provide meals, job training assistance and social activities to seniors. The Resolution states that reductions associated with federal sequestration were implemented in an indiscriminate manner, and the Department currently faces a funding reduction of \$1.58 million in federal and state matching funds in Fiscal Years 2012-13 and 2013-14. According to the Resolution, these reductions would affect thousands of seniors in the City who would be turned away from dining centers and placed on waiting lists. The Resolution therefore requests that the City include in its Federal Legislative Program sponsorship and/or support of legislation and/or administrative action that would reinstate Older Americans Act funding that has been reduced as a result of federal sequestration.

BACKGROUND

The Older Americans Act is a federal law enacted in 1965 that funds a system of care for older adults, caregivers of older adults, and persons with disabilities. Grant funds from the United States Department of Health and Human Services are passed through the California Department of Aging to local agencies such as the Department of Aging. Other funding sources utilized by the Department include Proposition A, City General Funds, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority funds.

Of the funds the Department receives, 90 percent is used to fund a system of 15 Multipurpose Senior Centers which include the following services: in-home assistance, case management, legal assistance, nutrition services, home delivered meals, and transportation. Aging provides the following direct services: Senior Community Service Employment Program (or Title V), Emergency Alert Response System (or EARS), family caregiver services, and provision of general information and assistance regarding the Department's programs.

Recent across-the-board federal spending reductions, also known as sequestration, have reduced Older Americans Act funding levels. From Fiscal Year 2012-13 to Fiscal Year 2013-14, federal

funds to the City were reduced from \$14,258,805 to \$12,528,991, a reduction of \$1,729,814 which disproportionately affected senior nutrition and meal programs. In response to the cuts the State provided Special Nutrition Funds (one time only) in the amount of \$650,441 and the City provided General Purpose Funds in the amount of \$1,750,000. Although the State and the City provided funds to address federal funding reductions in Fiscal Year 2013-14, the Department believes there is no guarantee that such funding sources will be available in the future if the federal government makes additional cuts to these programs.

We note that there is currently a bill pending before the United States Senate, Senate Bill 1028 (Sanders), which would re-authorize the Older Americans Act through Fiscal Year 2017-18. The bill also: (1) expresses a nonbinding opinion of the Senate that funding levels should be at least 12% above Fiscal Year 2009-10 levels, or \$2.675 billion; and (2) includes funds to address issues associated with elder abuse and economic insecurity. As of this writing, S. 1028 is currently pending in the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee.

To ensure that the City is able to continue providing vital services to older adults in the event there are additional reductions to Older Americans Act funds in the future, we recommend support of Resolution (Koretz – Rosendahl) to sponsor and/or support legislation and/or administrative action to reinstate Older Americans Act funding that has been reduced as a result of sequestration.

Departments Notified

Aging



Brian Randol

Analyst

Attachment:

Resolution (Koretz – Rosendahl)

13-0002-576

RESOLUTION

MAY 10 2013

REGS, ELECTING & INTERDEPARTMENTAL RELATIONS

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Aging relies on various sources, including federal grants such as Older Americans Act (OAA) funds to provide the City's senior population with services to improve their quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the OAA, enacted in 1965, provides community services and is considered to be the main provider of social and nutrition services for the elderly; and

WHEREAS, the City normally receives approximately \$14 million annually in OAA funds for use by the Department of Aging and/or community organizations that contract with the department to provide meals, job training assistance and social activities for the City's elderly population; and

WHEREAS, the federal sequestration reductions have been implemented in such an indiscriminate manner that funding for vital senior and family caregiver programs is being cut, and the City of Los Angeles is facing a combined FY2012-13 and FY2013-14 funding reduction of \$1,579,714 in both Federal and State matching funds; and

WHEREAS, for FY2013-14, the implementation of this sequestration will result in a funding reduction to the City of \$1,275,183, of which \$1,081,948 will be cut from the City's senior meals programs, directly affecting the City's ability to provide: (1) home delivered meals to a total of approximately 5,643 frail, homebound seniors; and (2) hot meals to a total of approximately 17,577 seniors that are able to attend City dining centers; and

WHEREAS, this \$1,081,948 cut for FY2013-14 City senior meals results in the elimination of 111,250 home delivered meals for 985 vulnerable seniors, who will be moved to waiting lists, and 88,090 congregate meals for another 2,381 seniors who will be turned away at City dining centers; and

WHEREAS, for many of these seniors, the OAA program provides the only hot meal for the day, human interaction and a daily safety check to keep these seniors active, healthy, and cared-for;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles, hereby includes in its 2013-2014 Federal Legislative Program SPONSORSHIP and/or SUPPORT of legislation and/or any administrative action that would reinstate Older Americans Act funding that has been reduced as a result of sequestration.

PRESENTED BY:

PAUL KORETZ
Councilmember, 5th District

SECONDED BY: