

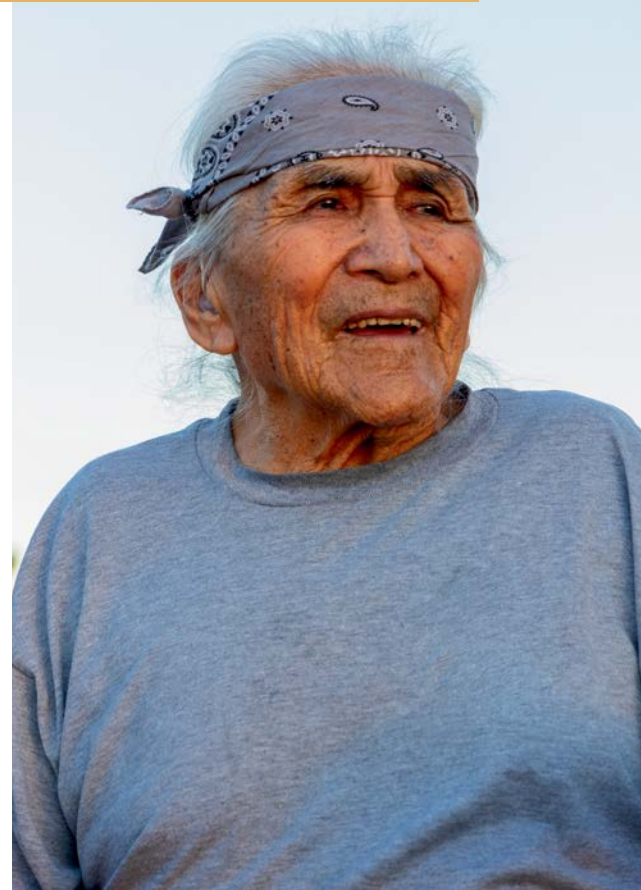
FUNDING FOR OLDER ADULT PROGRAMS

POSITION STATEMENT

The 21 Member Tribes of the Inter Tribal Association of Arizona (ITAA), Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. – Area Agency on Aging (ITCA-AAA), Region 8, urge Congress to prioritize reauthorization and funding of the Older Americans Act of 1965, protect Medicaid, and restore vital funding access to SNAP.

KEY POINTS

-  **Support the Older Americans Act of 1965 through Reauthorization and Funding.** The Older Americans Act serves as the primary federal vehicle for delivering critical, community-based care. Without a substantial increase in baseline reauthorization levels, tribal Area Agencies on Aging are forced to stretch already thin resources.
-  **Protect Medicaid.** Funding reductions and policy changes from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act will have the most impact on rural hospitals and tribal elders, where the Medicaid beneficiaries makes up a sizable portion of the payment population.
-  **Restore access to SNAP.** For tribal elders living in rural and frontier regions of Arizona, SNAP is an indispensable resource that works in tandem with the Older Americans Act. Without fully restored SNAP, elders will face severe risk of malnutrition, and the burden of feeding these communities will fall entirely onto the already overly extended budgets of tribal Area Agencies on Aging.



BACKGROUND

The ITCA-AAA was established in 1979 to administer Older Americans Act services for Titles III, VI, and VII programs. ITCA-AAA serves 21 Member Tribes throughout Arizona, actively addressing the needs of low-income elders in isolated, rural, and Tribal communities.

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Key Points

- **Support the Older Americans Act of 1965 through Reauthorization and Funding**
 - The Older Americans Act serves as the primary federal vehicle for delivering critical, community-based care, but current funding authorizations do not match the escalating realities in our communities. Tribal communities are experiencing a rapidly growing elder population with increasing costs for service delivery, particularly in rural and frontier areas where transportation and logistics present unique challenges and financial burdens.
 - Without a substantial increase in baseline reauthorization levels, tribal Area Agencies on Aging are forced to stretch already thin resources, inevitably leaving vulnerable elders without the meals, in-home care, and supportive services they need to age safely. This increase in reauthorization levels is not just a budgetary request, but a vital investment in preventing elder malnutrition, mitigating profound social isolation, and ensuring the dignity of our tribal elders.
- **Protect Medicaid**
 - When elders lose reliable access to preventative and routine care, manageable conditions rapidly deteriorate into medical emergencies, leading to poor and often fatal health outcomes. Funding reductions and policy changes from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act will have the most impact on rural hospitals and tribal elders, where the Medicaid beneficiaries makes up a sizable portion of the payment population. Healthcare centers and providers have indicated significant concern about maintaining services throughout these areas of our state.
- **Restoring access to SNAP**
 - For tribal elders living in rural and frontier regions of Arizona, SNAP is an indispensable resource that works in tandem with the Older Americans Act nutrition programs to ensure that elders get the nutrition they need to remain healthy. SNAP empowers elders to purchase additional food necessary to survive between home-delivered meals or congregate lunch programs. Recent cuts have already tightened this program, throwing it into a state of instability. Without fully restored SNAP, elders will face severe risk of malnutrition, and the burden of feeding these communities will fall entirely onto the already overly extended budgets of tribal Area Agencies on Aging.

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