

Subject: [External] BAA Meals on Wheels Funding

[External]

Madam Chair Kitchel,

I am writing to you this evening about the Area Agencies on Aging and VASCAMP's request for \$1 million in the BAA. We are grateful the legislature allocated \$1 million in the base budget last year. It helped us to provide higher meal reimbursements to all of the state's Meals on Wheels providers. Unfortunately, the funding gap is so big and food costs so high that we continue to need a total of \$3 million in the base budget that we requested last year.

If we receive \$1 million in one-time funding this year in the BAA, the meal providers will use it very quickly in the current fiscal year. Last year, we served nearly 1.2 million meals and we are seeing more older Vermonters qualifying for meals than last year and higher food costs. The \$1 million will help small community meal providers close the funding gap they struggle to address.

We also support the House recommendation to amend Vermont's Global Commitment to Health Section 1115 demonstration waiver to allow home-delivered meals to be a Medicaid-covered service.

Thank you again for your support for the Meals on Wheels program. Please reach out to me with any questions.

Mary H. Hayden
Executive Director, Vermont Association of Area Agencies on Aging (V4A)
27 Main Street, Suite 14
Montpelier, VT 05602
(802)225-6210
maryh@vermont4a.org



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