



To: House Committee on Appropriations  
Re: FY 2025 Budget Requests  
Date: February 6, 2024

### Funding for Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Programs

OAA Title III and state general funds are passed from DAIL to AAAs who contract with 47 meal providers to prepare and deliver home-delivered or community meals in compliance with OAA standards. AAAs and community meal providers may also fundraise and apply for grants. Strengthening older Vermonters' access to Meals on Wheels is included in Vermont's multi-sector plan on aging, AgeStrongVT, as authorized under Act 156, the Older Vermonters Act.

We appreciate the House Committee on Appropriations' support for last year's welcome increase of \$1 million to our base budget for Meals on Wheels. However, this increase did not provide enough meals for our growing demographic of older Vermonters and their nutritional needs.

- Last year, the program provided 1,185,564 nutritious meals to 16,257 older Vermonters, a 5% increase over the prior year.
- In FFY24, year-to-date, there is a higher number of enrollees than last year. Funding for senior nutrition has not kept pace with the aging population.
- Based on the average cost per meal and the number of meals served, the gap is growing to nearly \$4 million even after the state's generous support. AAAs and small community meal sites cannot fill that gap through local fundraising. Providing emergency meals and delivery to older Vermonters stranded due to this year's catastrophic flood and power outage events caused more budget shortfalls.

### Legislative Requests

The Vermont Association of Area Agencies on Aging (V4A) and the Vermont Association of Senior Centers and Meal Providers (VASCAMP) request your support for the following:

- FY 2025 Budget
  - An additional \$2 million in the SFY2025 base budget for Meals on Wheels, bringing the total amount to \$3 million in the base budget.
  - The VT Foodbank's request for \$5 million in the SFY2025 base budget.
- Amend Vermont's Global Commitment to Health Section 1115 demonstration waiver to allow home-delivered meals to be a Medicaid-covered service.

Our food resiliency partners, the Vermont Foodbank and Hunger Free VT, support this Meals on Wheels request.

Thank you for your generous support for senior nutrition programs! Please reach out to V4A and VASCAMP with any questions.

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