



Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland Response to Proposed White House Budget 3.22.17

Following the announcement of the proposed federal budget cuts targeting both Community Services Block Grants and the Department of Health and Human Services, there has been a frenzy of activity and public outcry over the possible impact on Meals on Wheels programs nationally. The public show of support for the work that we do has been heartening. However, the incomplete and misinformation being shared on social media can be confusing and is very alarming, ultimately damaging to our advocacy efforts. As ambassadors of Meals on Wheels and the voice of those we serve, it is important that we fully understand the impact these cuts will have and make our voice heard.

Here is what these proposed cuts mean for Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland.

Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland serves over 3,000 homebound people a year throughout Maryland, as well as those attending senior center programs, adult day care centers, and other congregate, eating together, meal programs. This equates to more than 1 million meals per year served to seniors.

In addition, Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland provides *'more than a meal'* support services such as safety and wellness checks, companion visitors, grocery shopping assistance, home repairs and modifications, pet food delivery, and care management services. Loss of this funding would mean that we would have to drastically reduce the number of people we can serve, as well as reduce or eliminate these critical support services aimed at keeping seniors living safely and independently in their homes and out of hospitals and nursing homes.

Get the Facts. Know the Numbers. Know the Impact.

Meals on Wheels America, our NATIONAL organization, receives 3% of their budget from the Community Services Block Grant. **Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland receives 56% of our budget through the Older Americans Act (OAA) funding and the Community Services Block Grant.**

The **OAA funding IS** also at risk because it is administered through the **Department of Health and Human Services, which is targeted for \$15 billion or 17.9% in cuts.** The **OAA funding IS federal money** that is given to the states by the Department of Health and Human Services and then is distributed to local governments to provide senior services in their cities and counties locally, through organizations such as **Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland.**

If the OAA cut is approved at the proposed level, it will be **a reduction by nearly \$1 Million to Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland. For every \$8 lost, another meal for a senior will not be served.**

Contrary to what has been reported, **Meals on Wheels is effective, has significant impact on the lives of those we serve, and saves money.** Meals on Wheels America, our national organization, has conducted rigorous research that demonstrates the following through a randomized controlled study: <http://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/docs/default-source/fact-sheets/2017/mealsonwheelsamerica-2017usfactsheet.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

Recipients of Meals on Wheels nutrition and support services are:

- Less likely to experience falls, one of the leading reasons for hospitalization for people over 65
- Less likely to go to the emergency room
- Spend less time in the hospital and in long term care facilities, saving billions of dollars annually in Medicare and Medicaid spending



“As a social worker who has spent a career working to keep seniors in their homes, Meals on Wheels is an invaluable resource, providing essential nutrition to homebound elders, along with the personal touch of a caring volunteer who visits daily. Meals on Wheels is a cost-effective and compassionate approach to respecting and protecting our most vulnerable citizens.”

Barbara Korenblit, LCSW
Community Director, MOWCM Board of Directors

Meals on Wheels is Cost Effective.

It costs less than \$6,000 per year to provide meals and support services to a senior in Central Maryland. That is the equivalent of less than one month in a nursing home or one day in the hospital.

Meals on Wheels programs leverage public support better than most organizations, making your federal tax dollar go even further. At Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland, for every \$1 of federal funds received, another \$1 in public support and in-kind services is raised in support of seniors. Despite sustained support by the public, foundations, and corporate partners, such a dramatic cut in funding will significantly affect our budget. We will be forced to reduce service in Central Maryland.

Maryland’s senior population is growing rapidly. There are currently **140,463 seniors in Maryland who are experiencing food insecurity; 261,115 experience isolation and the related health risks.***

Federal funding has not kept pace with the current need, and in fact has been flat, not even accounting for inflation. Deep cuts, as proposed in the current budget blueprint, will compound an already challenging task of meeting the growing need and will be devastating to our seniors.

Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland is committed to standing up for the nutritional, health and social needs of the seniors in our communities. We believe they deserve better, and we believe that you do, too.

How You Can Help.

- 1. Contact your congressman and tell them of the importance of Meals on Wheels funding.**
Let them know first hand the impact you’ve seen. In Maryland, go to: www.mdelect.net and for the rest of the United States, visit: www.usa.gov/elected-officials.
- 2. Share your knowledge of the budget cuts and their impact widely.**
Make your voice heard and correct the misinformation that is used to justify the cuts.
- 3. Support your local Meals on Wheels by volunteering your time or giving a monetary gift.**
To give to Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland, click here: <https://www.mealsonwheelsmd.org/Donate-Online>

* These figures are taken from the Meals on Wheels America 2016 Maryland State Fact Sheet: <http://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/docs/default-source/fact-sheets/2012/mow-factsheet-maryland2016.pdf?sfvrsn=2>