

Protecting Elders from Abuse Needs to be A National Priority: Support Funding of the Elder Justice Initiative

What is the Elder Justice Initiative?

The President's FY 2015 budget includes an Elder Justice Initiative of \$25 million. The funding would be used to create an Adult Protective Services (APS) National Data System, develop national APS program standards, and support evidence-based research regarding elder abuse. The provisions of the Elder Justice Initiative are part of the Elder Justice Act that passed with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in 2010, but were never funded.

Why is this important?

It is estimated that 1 in 10 elders experience some form of abuse or neglect. That's 10,000 elders in a community of 100,000! But we never find out about most abuse because for each case of elder abuse that is reported, 24 are not. Adult Protective Services (APS) is responsible by law for assisting elders and adults with disabilities and is often the first responder in cases involving abuse, neglect and exploitation. However, despite their responsibility to protect and help elders and other vulnerable adults, APS lacks reliable data and federal guidance regarding case investigation. This impacts how effective they can be in identifying and investigating abuse.

Did you know?

- There has never been federal funding to establish a national infrastructure for Adult Protective Services- there is currently no national APS database or national APS standards.
- Elder abuse occurs in the community and long-term care facilities and victims of abuse have a 300% higher risk of death compared to individuals that have not been abused.
- It is estimated that victims of financial exploitation lose \$2.9 billion a year. Direct medical costs due to elder abuse are estimated to exceed \$5 billion annually.

Why should YOU take action?

Elder abuse is widespread and has dire consequences for millions of vulnerable individuals and families in our country. As an individual receiving long-term care services and supports, a family member, a long-term care ombudsman, a long-term care provider, an advocate or other concerned citizen, YOU understand the need to protect elders and other vulnerable adults from abuse. Due to your experience and knowledge of long-term care services and supports, you've seen the effect of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation in your community, so we need YOUR voice to help make elder justice a priority in our country.

Add YOUR Voice to the Call for Elder Justice and Act Now!

- Use the following link to contact your federal legislators and ask them to support funding for the Elder Justice Initiative: http://wfc2.wiredforchange.com/o/8641/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=9622.
- Share this fact sheet with long-term care consumers, family members, long-term care ombudsmen, providers, advocates, friends, community organizations, churches and via social media and ask them to take action too.
- Stay informed about additional action needed to support this Elder Justice Initiative budget request, as well as other long-term care issues, by visiting the Consumer Voice website and joining our Action Network: www.theconsumervoice.org.

Visit the Consumer Voice (www.theconsumervoice.org) and the National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center (NORC) (www.ltombudsman.org) websites for additional information about elder abuse.