

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
ADMINISTRATION FOR COMMUNITY LIVING**

**House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies**

**Hearing on the FY 2016 President's Budget
Thursday, February 26, 2015, 10:00 a.m.**

**PRINCIPAL WITNESS:
Kathy Greenlee
Administrator of ACL
and Assistant Secretary for Aging**

Chairman Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, and members of the subcommittee:

My name is Kathy Greenlee, and I am the Administrator for the Administration for Community Living and the Assistant Secretary for Aging. Thank you for this opportunity to talk about how ACL plans to serve Americans with the budget we have requested for fiscal year 2016.

I am here today on behalf of a diverse group of people. I represent the 85-year-old who lives independently with a little bit of help -- things like rides to the doctor's office and lunch provided by her local senior center.

I also am here on behalf of the 25-year-old veteran. An IED in Afghanistan took away his balance and short-term memory. With the support of his wife and some in-home services, he is learning new ways to achieve his dreams.

And I am here for the 19-year-old with Down syndrome who is about to graduate from high school. Just like her friends, she is looking forward to college, finding a job, and starting the next chapter of her life.

And...ultimately...I represent most of us in this room. At some point in our lives, most of us will need assistance to maintain our independence, and many of us will provide care for a loved one.

The Administration for Community Living was created around one core idea – that older adults and people with disabilities should be able to live independently and participate fully in their communities.

This work has never been more important. By 2020, there will be more than 77 million people over the age of 60 in the United States. As many as two-thirds of them eventually will need help with dressing, showering, or similar activities. In addition, nearly 57 million people with disabilities live in non-institutional settings, and about 20 percent of them need help with daily living tasks.

We know that people enjoy a better quality of life when they are able to live at home. Community living also makes financial sense. The average cost of a shared room in a nursing home is almost **\$75 thousand** per year, and residential facilities for people with disabilities can cost three times that. When people cannot afford these costs, Medicaid is the primary payer.

In contrast, the supportive services ACL provides can enable people to remain in their homes and completely avoid or delay these more expensive services. With our budget request, ACL will work toward this goal in four ways:

First, we will increase access to home- and community-based services and supports. A **\$42.8 million** increase for senior nutrition programs will help provide meals to over 2 million more older adults. An additional **\$38.5 million** will help States assist seniors with daily activities, offer rides to doctors and grocery stores, and provide adult day services.

A **\$5 million** increase will enable Centers for Independent Living to help people with disabilities leave nursing homes and other institutions, and assist young

people with disabilities as they move from high school into adult life.

ACL also will invest in supporting families, who provide the vast majority of assistance to older adults and people with disabilities. When families become overwhelmed by the challenges of caregiving, government-funded solutions, which are far more expensive, often are the only option. ACL will direct **\$177 million** to help alleviate these strains and enable families to continue to assist their loved ones.

Second, ACL will expand efforts to connect people with information about programs and services. We will invest an additional **\$13.9 million** in Aging and Disability Resource Centers, which work with States to improve access to resources and help people remain in their communities. To share one success story, ADRCs have worked with the Veterans Administration to empower veterans to select and manage the supports they need to live at home.

Third, we will expand protections for our populations at most risk. More than 10 percent of older adults are abused, neglected, or exploited annually, and people with disabilities are four to ten times more likely to be abused than peers without disabilities. With the additional **\$21 million** requested this year, ACL will advance our efforts to provide federal support to States for their existing Adult Protective Services programs. This will include investments in innovation and research, as well as infrastructure development for national data collection.

Finally, ACL will develop and improve evidence-based programs and share best practices. We will invest **\$20 million** to modernize senior nutrition programs, which help older Americans remain healthy and independent. This will ensure the continued quality of the programs and help the programs prepare to meet the changing demands of seniors as the baby boom generation ages.

In addition, **this budget funds much-needed infrastructure.** The transfer of the Rehabilitation Act and Assistive Technology Act programs to ACL in 2014, and the transfer of other programs in earlier years, created a stronger organization that will better serve the country. But these transfers also created costs that were not fully funded. We are committed to supporting both the transferred programs and existing programs, such as those provided by the Older Americans Act and the Developmental Disabilities Act.

As Administrator of ACL and Assistant Secretary for Aging, I have been encouraged by the collaborative and entrepreneurial spirit of our federal, tribal, state and local partners. We are making a difference in preserving the rights of all people, regardless of age or ability, to fully participate in their communities.

However, we are at a critical juncture. The populations we serve are growing. We must continue to work together to ensure that older adults and people with disabilities have the services and supports they need to live at home, participate in their communities and avoid more costly alternatives.

This budget will allow ACL to continue to make and improve upon the investments that support this goal.

Thank you again.