$250 MILLION IN EMERGENCY FUNDING SIGNED INTO LAW
MEALS ON WHEELS AMERICA AND NANASP PRAISE PASSAGE AND
URGE CONTINUED AID FOR SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Arlington, VA, March 19, 2020 – Meals on Wheels America President and CEO Ellie Hollander and National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP) Executive Director Bob Blancato released a joint statement following enactment of H.R. 6201, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act:

As representatives of the nationwide network of senior nutrition programs, both congregate and home-delivered, we commend Congress and the Administration for its prompt and bipartisan enactment of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. This legislation includes several critical provisions aimed at supporting nutrition programs, namely $250 million in immediate emergency funds for Older Americans Act (OAA) Congregate, Home-Delivered and Native American Nutrition Services. It is estimated that this aid package will enable 25 million more meals to be delivered to seniors at a time of greatest need.

As we all navigate uncharted territory and a rapidly evolving situation amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the network of 5,000 senior nutrition programs across the country that we support are on the frontlines of it all. These programs provide a lifeline to millions of vulnerable seniors who for decades have depended on them for daily nutritious meals, social interaction and safety and wellness checks that allow them to remain independent in their homes and communities. In times of emergency or not, these programs deliver so much more than meals and are essential services to our communities and most at-risk citizens.

As the third COVID-19 stimulus package is developed, we implore Congress and the Administration to continue to support community-based organizations and ensure our nation’s hungry and isolated seniors are not forgotten. During this emergency, we urge the following actions:

- Provide increased supplemental funding for nutrition, transportation, elder abuse prevention and other OAA aging services to meet growing need and demand;
- Temporarily waive OAA nutrition requirements during this emergency to account for factors such as supply chain disruptions, need for swift methods of delivery and securing shelf-stable meals;
- Allow maximum funding transfer authority between OAA Congregate and Home-Delivered Nutrition Services;
- Provide ongoing guidance and technical assistance to community-based organizations to help ensure the health and safety of seniors, staff and volunteers;
- Grant priority access to senior nutrition providers for preventative supplies, including face masks, hand sanitizer and gloves;
- Ensure the provision of meals for older adults is made a priority by the federal government and that this is communicated to major suppliers and distributors; and
- Deem senior nutrition programs nationwide an essential service under states of emergency and declarations.
COVID-19 is a growing concern for all of us, with vulnerable seniors among the most at risk. The senior nutrition programs we represent are singularly focused on doing all they can to keep older Americans safe in communities across the country. Together, we call on our elected officials and leaders at all levels of governments, sectors and the public to support us throughout this effort so we can continue to protect our seniors no matter what.

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About Meals on Wheels America
Meals on Wheels America is the leadership organization supporting the more than 5,000 community-based programs across the country that are dedicated to addressing senior isolation and hunger. This network serves virtually every community in America and, along with more than two million staff and volunteers, delivers the nutritious meals, friendly visits and safety checks that enable America’s seniors to live nourished lives with independence and dignity. By providing funding, leadership, education, research and advocacy support, Meals on Wheels America empowers its local member programs to strengthen their communities, one senior at a time. For more information, or to find a Meals on Wheels provider near you, visit www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org.

About NANASP
Founded in 1977, the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP) is proud to be a leading organization advocating for community-based senior nutrition programs and staff. Our member programs represent a wide range of essential services providers who support the nutrition, health and life quality of seniors. With over 1,100 members from across the United States, we are national advocates for senior health and wellbeing who strengthen the policies and programs that nourish seniors. We accomplish this mission through a collective national voice and through local community action. For more information, go to nanasp.org.

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