$500 MILLION MORE IN EMERGENCY FUNDING FOR SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAMS SIGNED INTO LAW

MEALS ON WHEELS AMERICA AND NANASP PRAISE SUPPORT FOR OLDER AMERICANS ACT SERVICES AND URGE FURTHER ACTION TO FIGHT HUNGER

Arlington, VA, March 27, 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. 748, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020:

Together, on behalf of the nationwide network of congregate and home-delivered senior nutrition programs, we applaud Congress and the Administration for including several key policies and additional supplemental funding for Older Americans Act (OAA) services – such as $500 million in immediate emergency funds for OAA Congregate, Home-Delivered and Native American Nutrition Services – in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020. This is the third emergency package that has been signed into law in the past three weeks to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we appreciate the all-hours efforts of our lawmakers and their staff to secure critical support for our nation’s seniors and the programs that serve them during this time of unprecedented need.

We also commend the Administration for Community Living (ACL) for its prompt release of the first $250 million provided for OAA Nutrition Services in H.R. 6201, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, signed into law last week. We again urge swift action in distributing this emergency funding to states, and for states in turn to quickly provide funds to ensure that on-the-ground organizations serving our communities and most vulnerable can effectively put these resources to use.

Such unified federal, state and regional support for the network of 5,000 senior nutrition programs is essential now more than ever. These local programs are working night and day to ensure a growing number of seniors who need their help and services during this national emergency can receive vital nutrition and wellness checks and know that they are not alone, and the CARES Act makes this endeavor much more feasible. Policies included in this legislation – temporary waivers of some OAA nutrition requirements and maximum funding transfer authority between congregate and home-delivered nutrition services, among others – will provide senior nutrition programs across the country with the crucial ability to adapt to their community’s specific and most pressing needs amidst the ever-changing situation brought on by COVID-19.

While this legislation makes significant strides to buoy the OAA and address the increasing need for senior nutrition services, there is still more work to be done to guarantee that seniors, their families and caregivers – and the nonprofit community that serves them – are adequately protected through other federal resources and programs, so our country can weather the COVID-19 pandemic together and ensure our most vulnerable are not left behind.
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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