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[House Amendment to S. 192, Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2015](#)

FLOOR SITUATION

On Monday, March 21, 2016, the House will consider House amendment to [S. 192](#), the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2015, under suspension of the rules. S. 192 was introduced on January 20, 2016 by Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions which ordered the bill reported without amendment favorably on January 28, 2015. S. 192 passed the Senate by voice vote without amendment on July 16, 2015.

SUMMARY

S. 192, as amended, would reauthorize the Older Americans Act (OAA) through Fiscal Year 2019 in order to provide for a wide range of social services and programs for America's seniors and their caregivers. These programs include nutrition services, community service employment, and elder abuse prevention. For a detailed summary please refer to the Education and the Workforce Committee's Bill [Summary](#).

Major House changes to S. 192:

- Improves alignment between existing programs designed to provide employment and community service opportunities to older Americans.
- Requires state Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) grant recipients coordinate services carried out under the OAA with the employment services carried out under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) - and directs states to reduce duplication between the programs.
- Requires the SCSEP program to adopt WIOA performance indicators related to employment and earnings to provide greater transparency relating to program effectiveness.
- Clarifies how services are funded to better ensure the administration adheres to congressional intent when implementing the law.
- Includes defined authorization levels for OAA programs.

BACKGROUND

The Older Americans Act (OAA), originally enacted in 1965, supports a wide range of social services and programs for individuals aged 60 years or older. These services and programs include supportive services, congregate nutrition services, home-delivered nutrition services, family caregiver support, community service employment, and services to prevent the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older persons.

Congress has reauthorized and amended the OAA numerous times since it was first enacted. The last OAA reauthorization occurred in 2006, when Congress enacted *the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2006* ([P.L. 109-365](#)), which extended the act through FY2011. Authorizations for most OAA programs, including the senior nutrition programs, expired on September 30, 2011. Congress has continued to appropriate funding for OAA-authorized activities for FY2012 through FY2016.¹

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA; [P.L. 113-128](#)), which succeeded the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-220) as the primary federal workforce development legislation, was enacted in July 2014 to bring about increased coordination among federal workforce development and related programs.²

Major Titles in OAA under current law include³:

Title I. Declaration of Objectives; Definitions

Title I of the OAA sets out broad social policy objectives oriented toward improving the lives of all older Americans. Also, Title I provides definitions for various terms under the act.

Title II. Administration on Aging

Title II establishes the Administration on Aging as the chief federal agency advocating for older persons. Title II also establishes State Units on Aging (SUAs), who serve as the state agency primarily responsible for planning and policy development as well as administration of OAA activities. In addition, the act authorizes the Assistant Secretary to make grants to eligible tribal organizations for social and nutrition services to older Native Americans. Title II also establishes Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), which are designated by SUAs to operate within specified planning and service areas. AAAs serve as local entities who, either directly or through contract with local service providers, oversee a comprehensive and coordinated service system for the delivery of social, nutrition, and long-term services and supports to older individuals.

Title III. Grants for State and Community Programs on Aging

Title III authorizes grants to 56 SUAs and over 600 AAAs to act as advocates on behalf of, and to coordinate programs for, older persons. These programs include supportive services, nutrition services, family caregiver support, and preventive health services.

Title IV. Activities for Health, Independence, and Longevity

Title IV of the OAA authorizes the Assistant Secretary for Aging to award funds for training, research, and demonstration projects in the field of aging.

Title V. Community Service Employment for Older Americans

¹ See CRS Report, "[Older Americans Act: Background and Overview](#)," March 15, 2016, at 1.

² See CRS Report, "[The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the One-Stop Delivery System](#)," Oct. 27, 2015 at 1.

³ See CRS Report, "[Older Americans Act: Background and Overview](#)," March 15, 2016, at 5.

Title V's purpose, also known as the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), is the promotion of useful part-time opportunities in community service activities for unemployed low-income persons who are 55 years or older and who have poor employment prospects. The Title V program is administered by the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. It is the only OAA program not administered by the Administration on Aging.

Title VI. Grants for Services for Native Americans

Title VI authorizes funds for supportive and nutrition services to older Native Americans. Services include transportation, home-delivered and congregate nutrition services, information and referral, and a wide range of home care services. Title VI also authorizes caregiver support services to Native American elders.

Title VII. Vulnerable Elder Rights Protection Activities

Title VII authorizes the Long-Term Care (LTC) Ombudsman Program as well as Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Prevention Programs.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing S.192 as passed by the Senate would result in outlays of \$5.8 billion over the 2016-2020 period. The House amendment replaces the Senate's "such sums" authorization levels with authorization levels in line with current law. Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information please contact [Molly Newell](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 2-1374.