



AZ Aging

AZAging's Report of Activities of Area Agencies on Aging

Effects of the Proposed Federal Funding Freeze on Area Agencies on Aging

With the new Presidential Administration taking office in January, the federal funding freeze has been of significant priority for Area Agencies on Aging. Though there is a court injunction on the funding freeze and a restraining order on the federal government from freezing funds to contractors and grants, Older Americans Act programs, SHIP, SMP, SSBG, CDBG, and other vital funding sources for the Arizona Aging Network have been targeted for further review.

Freezing funding for Area Agencies on Aging at a federal level would be catastrophic for Arizonans who rely on their local Area Agency on Aging for important services such as home-delivered meals, bathing, dressing, light housekeeping, shopping, and more. Across the state, Area Agencies on Aging are concerned about the impact this funding freeze would have on both their own internal operations and that of their providers, in addition to the devastating impact that it would have on the people we serve. Projected funding shows that most Area Agencies on Aging throughout the State would be unable to sustain more than two weeks of payroll expenditures without the support of Arizona's State Government.

Area Agencies on Aging from across the state have been vocal in their opposition to the federal funding freeze, with AZAging sending a letter to all of Arizona's Congressional Delegation and having specific conversations with Legislators Kelly, Gallego, Ciscomani, Grijalva, and Stanton. AZAging has worked closely with the Arizona Department of Economic Security Division of Aging and Adult Services, Arizona's Governor's Office, and USAging to support the network.

On January 29th, Region One Area Agency on Aging's President & CEO, Mary Lynn Kasunic, participated in a press conference with Representatives Greg Stanton, Yassamin Ansari, and the President of the Gila River Indian Community to highlight the impact that the funding freeze would have on older adults in Maricopa County. Pima Council on Aging sent out an advocacy alert that generated over 380 letters being sent to Members of Congress and President Trump.



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Arizona State Legislature

At the legislative level, AZAging is closely following and supporting HB2379, introduced by Representative Alma Hernandez. This bill would appropriate \$10 million to the Area Agencies on Aging, \$5 million for home and community-based services and \$5 million to support the continuation of the housing assistance program for older adults. We are also supportive of Senator Lela Alston's efforts for increased funding for Area Agencies on Aging represented in SB1483.

There are two housing assistance bills that AZAging also supports. These two bills include HB2350 and SB1485.

For additional information on AZAging's legislative priorities, please see the attached legislative position statements.

Addressing Housing and Homelessness

Area Agencies on Aging across Arizona continue to see the need for housing and homelessness-related programming and service. In addition to the pilot program that was funded by the State Legislature, some Area Agencies on Aging are working to ensure additional support in this area. During the past quarter, ITCA Area Agency on Aging delivered negative temperature sleeping bags, backpacks, handwarmers, socks, jackets, and other important survival items for people who were unhoused.

Central Arizona Aging continues to prioritize low-income senior housing by researching funding and collaboration opportunities for Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and other project-based funding.

Membership Changes for AZAging

AZAging is excited to welcome the Navajo Nation's Division of Aging and Long Term Support as a member of our association! With the inclusion of Navajo Nation, AZAging now represents all Area Agencies on Aging in Arizona. The AZAging membership also includes: Region One Area Agency on Aging, Pima Council on Aging, NACOG Aging, WACOG Area Agency on Aging, SEAGO Area Agency on Aging, ITCA Area Agency on Aging, and Central Arizona Aging. Navajo Nation will be represented by Marlinda Littleman, who serves as the Health Services Administrator for the Division of Aging and Long-Term Support.



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W. Mark Clark, President & CEO of Pima Council on Aging retired in January 2025, with his successor, Robert Ojeda, joining the team at PCOA on March 4, 2025. Clark has served for two years as AZAging's Chair, and has played a leading role in advocacy and public policy work that has advanced the aging network at a state and federal level for well over a decade. Mark represented Arizona Area Agencies on Aging in 2017 when he testified on Capitol Hill in the Senate Special Committee on Aging. We congratulate Mark on his distinguished career and continued professional success at PCOA. We are appreciative of his contributions to the aging network and wish Robert the best of luck as he joins the network in March.