

Older Americans Act: Accomplishments and Challenges

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Older Americans Act of 1965, P.L. 89-73, July 14, 1965



Lyndon Johnson signing the OAA, 1965.

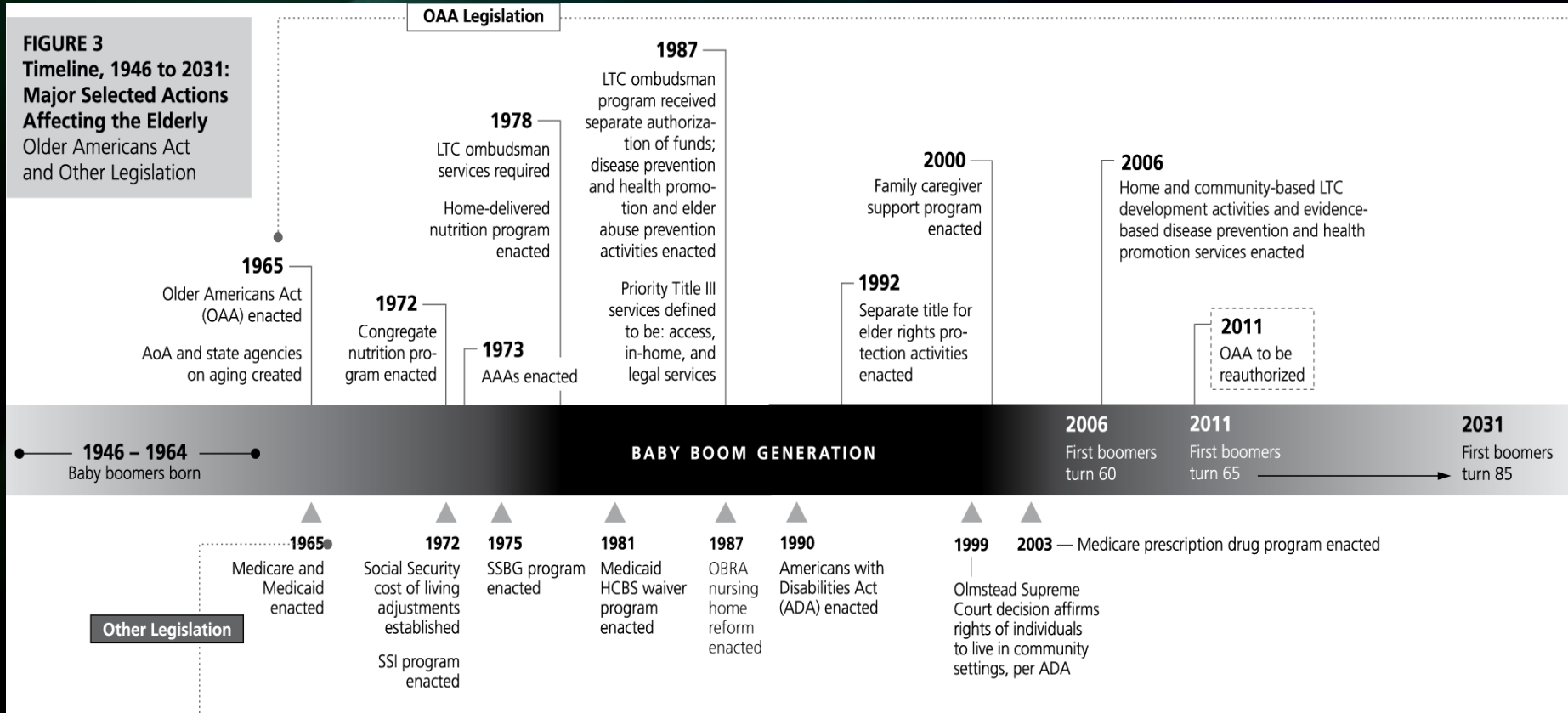
1965 Older Americans Act, Historical Development

- **1965: Legacy of the Great Society**
 - 10 broad national policy objectives on aging
 - Creation of AoA as federal focal point on aging
 - Grants to states for community planning & services
 - Authority for research, demonstration, and training projects

OAA: Major Amendments

- **1965 Act was one of the foundation pieces for evolving public policy on aging**
 - Creation of strategies, programs, and services to meet needs of older persons
 - Provision of tangible and intangible help to innumerable older persons
 - Continuous and dynamic identification of older persons' needs
 - Development of nationwide aging infrastructure
 - Recruitment of thousands of career professionals to field of aging

Timeline of OAA Programs



OAA, Major Amendments, Cont'd

- **1967-73: State and Area Agency on Aging Infrastructure Development**
 - Increased state agency requirements and funding for statewide planning and coordination (1967, 1969, 1973)
 - AAAs created; States and AAAs required to develop a “comprehensive and coordinated service system” (1973)
 - AAAs primary responsibility: coordinate services, stimulate expansion of services, serve as advocates for, and exercise leadership on behalf of, older persons (1973)
 - AAAs “not intended” to be “primary provider of services” (1973)

OAA, Major Amendments, Cont'd

- **1972-1978: Beginning of Specific Service Initiatives**
 - National nutrition program (1972)
 - Multipurpose senior centers (1973)
 - Community service employment (1973)
 - Separate authorization for home-delivered meals (1978)
 - Long-term care ombudsman program (1978)

OAA, Major Amendments, Cont'd

- **1978 – 1992 Consolidation, Coordination, Streamlining, and Differentiation**
 - 1978 -- Consolidation of titles for State/AAA operations, nutrition services, and senior centers
 - 1987 -- New and separate authorizations for in-home services, health education and promotion, elder abuse prevention and long-term care ombudsman, etc
 - 1992 -- Again, major restructuring by creating a new Title VII for Vulnerable Elder Rights Protection Activities

OAA, Major Amendments, Cont'd

- **2000**
 - National family caregiver support program authorized
 - Cost-sharing recognized
- **2006 (examples)**
 - Focus on development of HCBS
 - Requires AoA to conduct R&D on innovative, cost-effective strategies in LTC
 - Additional target groups added: those at risk for institutionalization and those with limited English proficiency
 - Implement ADRCs in all states
 - SUA and AAA focus on planning for baby boom population

Themes in Legislative Developments

“Dance of Legislation”

- **Participation of older persons in OAA programs**
 - Universal vs. targeted participation “Greatest social and economic need”
 - Low income and minority
 - People with Alzheimer’s disease; frail elderly; those at risk for institutionalization; limited English proficiency
 - Rural constituencies
 - Caregivers
 - Abused, neglected, exploited older persons, both in home and institutional settings, etc.

Themes in Legislative Developments

- **Tension between federally designated services and state and local needs**
 - e.g., congressional directives for mandatory services, but states allowed to transfer of funds between supportive and nutrition services
- **Consolidation, simplification, flexibility vs. increasing number of congressionally imposed requirements**
- **Planning, coordination, & advocacy functions vs. management of specific service programs**

Themes in Legislative Developments

- **Title III formula controversies**
 - How to equitably distribute funds
- **Specific statutory recognition to functions already performed by state/area agencies (law catch-up)**
 - E.g., Outreach for public benefits, HCBS
- **Some R&D initiatives become operating programs**
 - E.g., Nutrition program, long-term care, ombudsman, HCBS waivers, outreach for benefits, Alzheimer's grants

Themes in Legislative Developments

- **Tension between requirements to develop “compre/coord” system, but limited control over non-OAA funds — has changed over time, e.g. HCBS waivers, SHIP funds**

Policy Questions

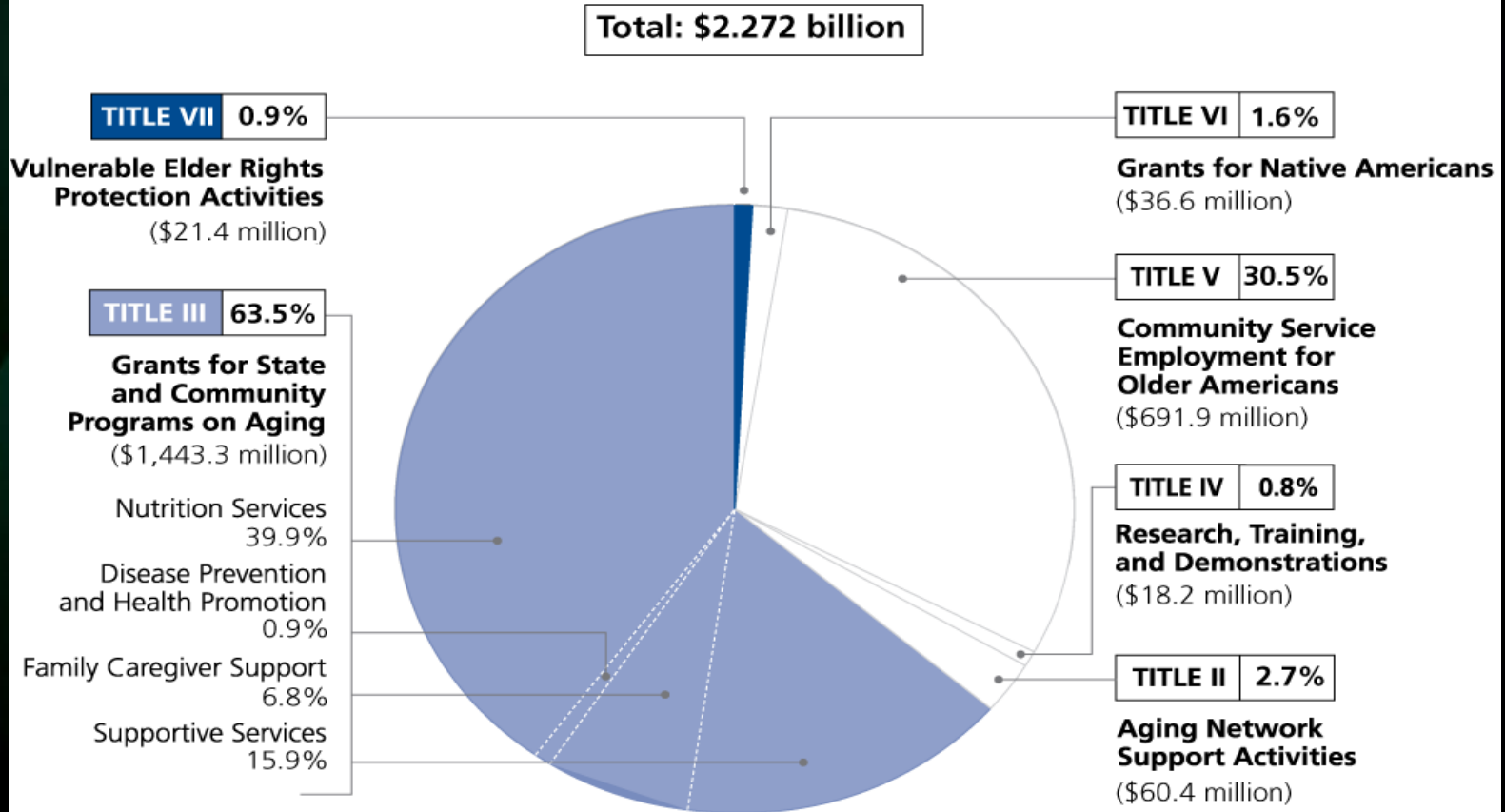
- **How should Act be positioned to prepare for baby boom population?**
 - How should current programs be altered to accommodate changing older population? (eg, nutrition, senior centers)
 - How to balance universal participation issues versus special populations?

Policy Questions for Reauthorization

- **How to balance interest group requests for new authorities with requests for increased appropriations?**
 - Are authorizing programs too broad for relatively limited funding?
 - What is needed most? new programs, expanded authority, and/or increased funding?
 - How do new programs affect funding for existing programs?

OAA Funding

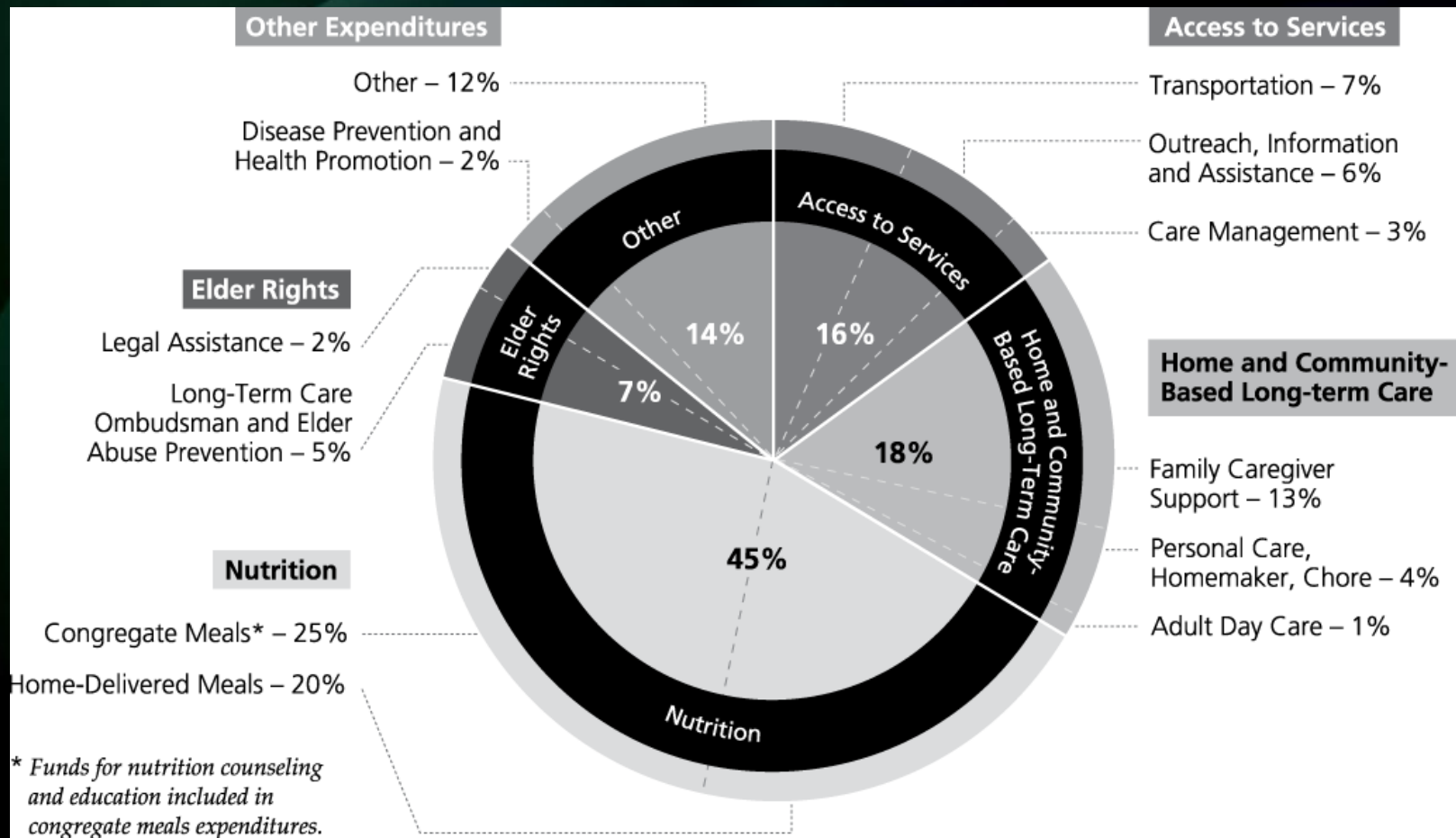
Older Americans Act, FY 2009 Appropriations



Source: Prepared by the National Health Policy Forum, based on appropriations data in Angela Napili, "Older Americans Act (OAA): Funding,"

Congressional Research Service, Report RL33880, updated April 8, 2009.

OAA Expenditures, Titles III and VII, 2006



Beyond the Older Americans Act

- **Management of Medicaid and State-funded home and community-based services**
 - 2/3s of SUAs manage Medicaid HCBS waivers
 - Some SUAs have played a pivotal role in state LTC systems redesign
- **Management of adult protective services funds**
 - 31 SUAs manage APS funds
- **State health insurance program (SHIP)**
 - 2/3s of SUAs manage CMS' SHIP funds

OAA: Broad Mission, Limited Resources

- Some say OAA resources have not kept pace with increasing older population
- But aging network successful in leveraging non-OAA funds and in developing varied services programs; will this continue?
- The aging of the baby boom will pose challenges for the aging infrastructure
- Attention to scarce resources may have increased salience in 2011 – when the Act will be reviewed for reauthorization and the first year the baby boom population turns age 65.