



2018 POLICY AGENDA

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND BUDGET PRIORITIES

Meals On Wheels California (MOWCA) is a **newly established association** affiliated with Meals on Wheels America. Our **mission** is to create a unified voice of **nutrition providers in California** and broaden the **impact** of our programs that **improve the lives** of seniors, adults with disabilities and their families. We serve over **17 million meals** a year statewide and the need is growing.

MOWCA advances **legislation and policies** that strengthen programs that provide home-delivered and group setting (congregate) meals, the volunteers who make them happen and the seniors they serve. We must ensure that California is able to meet the **growing number** of seniors who need the support that enables them to live more **nourished lives** with the independence and dignity they deserve.

MOWCA advocacy impacts senior poverty and hunger in these focus areas:

Nutrition and Isolation

Healthcare System and Support Services

State and Federal Funding for Nutrition Programs

Public Benefits and Self-Sufficiency

Safety Net and Food Security

STATE BUDGET AND LEGISLATION

Vital health and human services programs that provide a **safety net for low-income Californians** were cut by \$15 billion during the recession. SSI/SSP grant levels trap seniors and adults with disabilities at 90% of the Federal Poverty Level, leaving no money to purchase food. SSI/SSP and IHSS recipients in California make up 25-30% of those in need of food and cannot receive CalFresh. Nutrition services promote wellness, improve health outcomes and reduce health care costs.

We support increasing the capacity of nutrition programs under the Older Californians and Older Americans Acts, including Congregate Meal Lunch Sites and Home-Delivered Meals.

We support reinstating the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for the SSI/SSP program so that recipients receive a payment that is not below 100% of the Federal Poverty Line.

We support legislation that strengthens and protects critical services for seniors and adults with disabilities.

www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/california

FEDERAL BUDGET AND LEGISLATION

The public-private partnership supporting the Meals on Wheels movement is one of the most effective models in America. However, federal funding has failed to keep pace with the escalating growth in the senior population and the need for nutritious meals.

We support protecting and strengthening the Older Americans Act and Social Services, Community Services and Community Development Block Grants at funding levels to address increasing demand.

We support improving access to federal nutrition programs for seniors and adults with disabilities.

We support modifications to the tax code that can help encourage and increase the charitable donations our programs rely on to serve seniors in need.

Older Americans Act

The Older Americans Act (OAA) has been the primary federal legislation supporting nutrition, social and preventative services for Americans 60 and older since 1965, and was reauthorized in 2016. OAA programs are vital for seniors who are at significant risk of hunger or losing their ability to live independently. The Older Americans Act provides essential services every year to nearly 11 million seniors, including information and referral assistance, in-home supports, nutrition programs, transportation, caregiver support, job training, legal services and protection from abuse and financial exploitation. The OAA supported the provision of nearly 218 million meals that were delivered to more than 2.4 million seniors nationwide.

Social Services, Community Services and Community Development Block Grants (SSBG, CSBG, CDBG)

Unless Congress acts, cuts to these block grants will lead to increased waiting times, reduced delivery days, layoffs, fewer meals and, in some cases, closing programs entirely. These programs are vital to enabling Meals on Wheels programs to serve more seniors in need, which in turn saves substantial taxpayer dollars by keeping seniors healthier and independent in their own homes, out of hospitals or nursing facilities.

Federal Nutrition Programs

There are more than 10 million seniors struggling with hunger today – that’s 1 in 6. In addition to Home-Delivered and Congregate Nutrition Programs, there are several federal programs that provide food/grocery assistance for low-income seniors. These include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CFSP) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).

Tax Code & Charitable Donations

Meals on Wheels programs could not operate without the generous charitable donations of volunteers. Whether donations take the form of donated goods and services, money or volunteering mileage and one’s own vehicle to deliver meals.

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