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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Detroit Area Agency on Aging

Statement on Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Proposal

Meals on Wheels...More than just a Meal, it's an investment

Detroit, Michigan (May 31, 2017) – Detroit Area Agency on Aging (DAAA), a nonprofit organization with a mission to educate, advocate and promote healthy aging, provides 2,500 meals daily to homebound seniors 60 years of age and older and disabled adults living in Detroit, the five Grosse Pointes, Hamtramck, Harper Woods and Highland Park.

The President sent his Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Budget to Congress on Tuesday, May 23, 2017, which makes investments in defense programs largely at the expense of non-defense discretionary (NDD) and other anti-hunger and poverty programs that serve our nation's most vulnerable population. The primary source of federal Meals on Wheels funding – the Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Program – would receive a \$3 million decrease over current FY 2017 levels that were approved by Congress and signed into law by the President earlier this month.

This budget calls for funding levels that would widen the already existing gap between seniors receiving meals and seniors served. The number of seniors threatened by hunger will only increase and in turn cause a far greater taxpayer burden through costly Medicare and Medicaid expenses. In Wayne County, there are more than 10,000 older Americans and adults with disabilities that could use a meal. This number will continue to grow as 10,000 older adults will turn 65 every day until the year 2030.

According to Meals on Wheels America, “cuts to funding sources on which Meals on Wheels programs – rely coupled with the significant reductions proposed to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, commonly known as food stamps), Medicaid and other safety net programs for low-income Americans and people with disabilities – would exacerbate the widespread suffering already felt by millions of vulnerable seniors and put greater pressure on an already strained senior support infrastructure.”

Based on research, the proposed FY 2018 budget cuts would reduce the following known benefits:

- Food Security – seniors know they will get a hot nutritious meal
- Prevents isolation and anxiety
- Serves as safety check for our most vulnerable population
- Reduce medical cost such as hospitalization and reoccurring hospitalization
- Provides a nutritional value and improves the quality of life
- Enables at-risk seniors to stay out of more expensive healthcare settings and remain healthier, safe and independent in their own homes, where they want to be
- Without support from programs like Meals on Wheels, millions of seniors are forced to prematurely trade their homes for nursing facilities.
- Meals on Wheels saves U.S. citizens billions of dollars in unnecessary Medicaid and Medicare expenses every year – tax dollars that can be spent in much better ways.
- The reality is that more than 10 million seniors in America struggle with hunger, 15.2 million live in isolation and 18.4 million live at or below poverty level. This problem will only become more serious as the senior population is projected to double by 2050. Any cuts to this program will be detrimental to our aging population.

About Detroit Area Agency on Aging

Established in 1980, the Detroit Area Agency on Aging (DAAA) is a nonprofit agency that serves older adults, adults with disabilities and caregivers residing in Detroit, the five Grosse Pointes, Hamtramck, Harper Woods and Highland Park. We are one of 16 Area Agencies on Aging in the state of Michigan and 670 in the nation. Our mission is to educate, advocate and promote healthy aging to enable people to make choices about home and community-based services and long-term care that will improve their quality.

For more information, please call (313) 446-4444 or visit <http://www.DetroitSeniorSolution.org>

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