




# o4a Advocacy Conference

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March 22, 2023



# New Congress, New Players

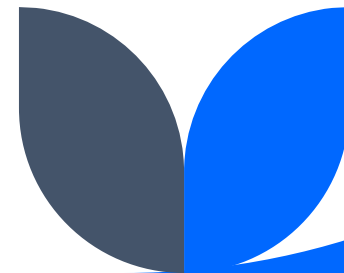
The 118<sup>th</sup> Congress is well underway

Washington returns to divided government

Majorities are different but tight margins are the same in House and Senate

Suggests more gridlock? Or renewed power of centrists?

Odd fact: 2 of 4 Congressional leaders are from Brooklyn



# New Players: House

Many more new players in House due to shift in majority

Kevin McCarthy: Speaker of the House

New chairs include:

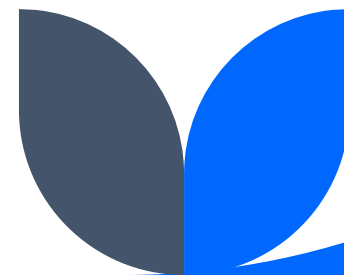
Kay Granger, Appropriations Committee (funding)

Jason Smith, Ways and Means (Social Security, Medicare, Elder Justice)

Cathy McMorris Rodgers Energy and Commerce (Medicaid)

Virginia Foxx, Education and Workforce  
(Older Americans Act)

Glenn Thompson, Agriculture (Farm Bill)



# Ohio Delegation: Relevant Committees

Rep. Jim Jordan: Judiciary, House leadership

Reps. Brad Wenstrup, Mike Carey: Ways and Means (Social Security, Medicare, elder justice)

Reps. Dave Joyce, Marcy Kaptur: Appropriations (spending)

Reps. Troy Balderson, Bill Johnson, Bob Latta: Energy and Commerce (Medicaid)

Reps. Max Miller, Shontel Brown: Agriculture (SNAP, nutrition programs)



# New Players: Senate

Two major new Committee players:

Patty Murray, new Chair of Appropriations (funding)

Sidenote—top 4 leaders for funding House and Senate are all women

Bernie Sanders, new Chair of HELP (Older Americans Act and much more)

Also:

Ron Wyden, returning Chair of Finance (Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, Elder Justice Act)

Bob Casey, returning Chair of Aging



# Ohio Senators: Relevant Committees

Sen. Sherrod Brown: Agriculture (Farm Bill, nutrition) and Finance (Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security)

Sen. JD Vance: Aging



# Top-Ticket Issues to Cover

Debt ceiling

FY 2024 and competing budget proposals

Public health emergency comes to an end

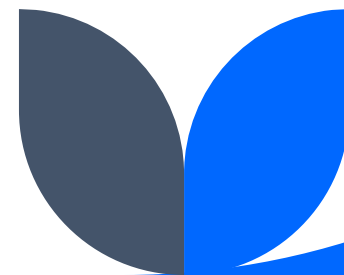
Social Security

Medicare

Farm Bill

Elder justice

Others (in brief)



# Top-Ticket Issues: Lifting the Debt Ceiling

Ability of the government to continue to borrow

Expires late spring/early summer (timing unclear)

Failure to lift the ceiling could mean default

Options:

- “Clean” action to lift ceiling

- Or tie it to other issues

President said no negotiation... and House Republicans disagree





# Debt Ceiling (cont.)

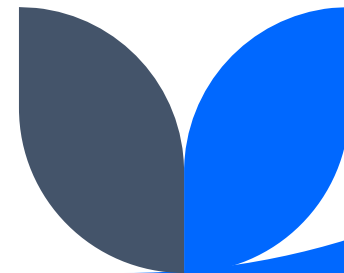
While waiting for this vote, one important development:

Social Security and Medicare reform will not be part of deal as per State of the Union impromptu agreement and statements by Speaker McCarthy

Unless it's a clean bill, what else could be tied to it?

- Spending cuts

- Medicaid reform



# Take a Break!

Pause

Stretch

Jot down your questions on the materials so far

# Top-Ticket Issues: Dueling FY 2024 Budget Proposals

Just as debt ceiling has a deadline, so does federal funding  
FY 2023 ends Sept 30

FY 2024 budget process is underway (but late)

President's budget released March 9

An alternative budget plan released by House Freedom  
Caucus next day

Radically different in priorities and provisions for aging  
programs and beyond

To compare...



# Biden Budget: Aging Priorities

HCBS funding

President proposed \$150 billion in new Medicaid HCBS funding over next decade

Includes \$278 million for 2 Medicaid HCBS quality reporting programs

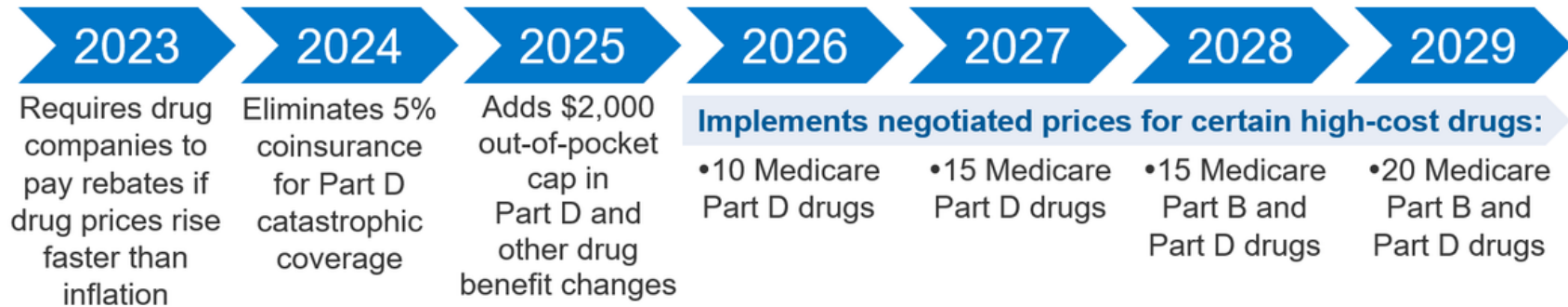
\$10 million for HCBS measurement program

Overall intended to address waiting lists (estimated to be 800,000) and workforce issues and enhance supports for family caregivers



# Budget Aging Priorities (cont.)

President proposes further prescription drug reforms beyond those passed in the Inflation Reduction Act



President's budget would increase the number of drugs that Medicare could negotiate on prices for

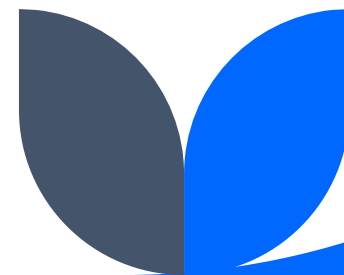


# Budget Aging Priorities (cont.)

Also formally proposes a provision that was in the IRA letting CMS require drugmakers to pay back Medicare when they raise prices faster than the rate of inflation

And HHS has also just announced the first set of Part B prescription drugs that will be subject to Medicare inflation rebates, meaning lower co-insurance for beneficiaries

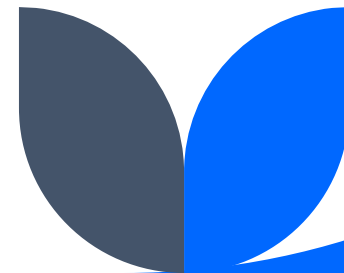
Budget also proposes a cap of \$2 co-pays on high value generic drugs



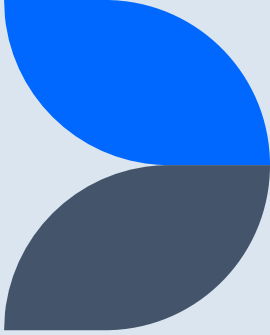
# Budget Aging Priorities (cont.)

President's budget gives important funding boost for programs and services under the Older Americans Act

Leading with a \$217 million increase in funding for the nutrition programs under the Act



# Aging Programs: Biden Proposal



Program	FY23 Funding	FY24 Biden Proposal
OAA Title III-B (HCBS)	\$410 million	\$500 million
OAA Title III-C (nutrition)	\$1.066 billion	\$1.284 billion
OAA Title III-D (preventive health)	\$26.3 million	\$26.3 million
OAA Title III-E (family caregiver support)	\$205 million	\$250 million
OAA Title VI-A (Native American nutrition/support)	\$38 million	\$70 million
OAA Title VII LTC Ombudsman	\$21.9 million	\$27 million
APS State Formula Grants	\$15 million	\$58 million

\*numbers are slightly rounded



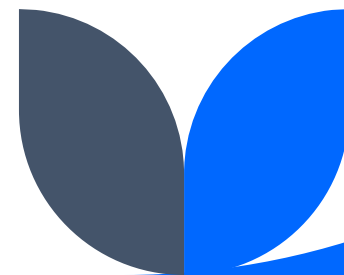
# Biden Budget: Telehealth/Rural America

Budget would continue to invest in telehealth with special emphasis on rural America, including:

Increased access for rural telehealth with a six-fold increase in the budget for Health Resources and Services Administration

Support for rural health care workforce development training programs

\$30 million to aid rural hospitals at risk of closure by expanding their telehealth options



# Biden Budget: Mental Health

Would eliminate Medicare cost-sharing for three mental health visits a year

Would require parity between physical and mental health coverage under Medicare



# Alternative Budget (Not Yet Official)

The House Freedom Caucus has unveiled its alternative budget

Not the official position of House Republicans

Among its provisions:

- Rescinding unspent pandemic funding

- \$131 billion in cuts to non-defense programs

- Imposing work requirements in Medicaid

Medicare and Social Security are not touched



# Getting to the FY 2024 Finish Line

Remaining steps:

Ongoing review of Biden budget

Await official House Republican budget

Possible adoption of budget resolutions in House and/or Senate

Individual agency bills proceed through appropriations committee

Await another CR on October 1



# Take a Break: Part 2!

Pause

Stretch

Jot down your questions on the materials so far

# Top-Ticket Issues: End of the Public Health Emergency

Formal end expected on or before May 11

Consequences will be felt in many areas

According to CMS, covid vaccines will continue to be provided with no charge after the PHE ends. However, current access to free over the counter covid-19 tests for older adults will end. Efforts are underway to extend this

A number of telehealth expansions may or may not be extended; it is possible that legislation may address this before the end of the PHE



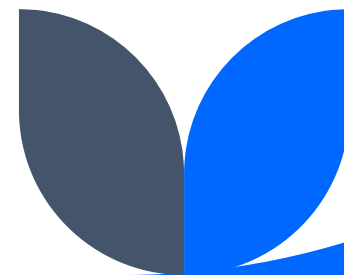
# End of PHE and OAA

While we await more guidance from ACL, we can expect that these flexibilities will end:

100 percent transfer authority in the nutrition program

And a return to meals having to provide at least 1/3 RDA

Other flexibilities are tied to major disaster declarations, other legislation such as CARES, ARPA; those have different end dates



# End of PHE and Medicaid

The end of the PHE also impacts Medicaid enrollment, including the “continuous enrollment requirement”

Millions may lose Medicaid coverage abruptly post-PHE





# Top-Ticket Issues: Social Security: Talk... or Action?

The always politically volatile issue of Social Security is back

Who will protect and who will/how to reform?

Arose as issue at end of midterm election campaign

Two proposals:

Have all federal programs including Social Security sunset  
after 5 years and be reviewed

Raise the retirement age to 70



# Social Security (cont.)

Now in 2023 those who would protect and preserve have gained ground

Began with President Biden early in year saying Social Security reform will not be part of any debt ceiling agreement

Peaked during the State of the Union when President reaffirmed the commitment and got bipartisan support

Followed by the House Speaker reiterating no Social Security reform



# Social Security: Then What?

A bipartisan group of senators are meeting to discuss Social Security

Two things could motivate action:

The 2023 Trustees Report, which will determine how much longer full benefits can be paid. If date moves up, this will trigger reaction and maybe action

2023 is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of the last major Social Security reform bill which made many significant changes, including raising the retirement age and taxing benefits for the first time

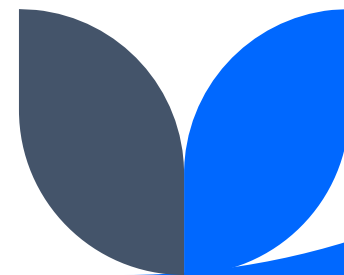


# Top-Ticket Issues: Medicare and Its Future

While “off the table” for reductions, its future still needs to be addressed

2028 is now the estimated year of insolvency from the Medicare trustees

President Biden released a plan earlier this month to extend Medicare solvency for 25 years



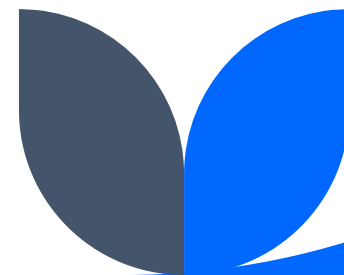
# Medicare and Its Future (cont.)

Key element of the plan would be to increase taxes on those making over \$400,000

Proposal faces an uncertain and difficult future

Tax increases of any kind spark controversy

Key date to consider: next report of the Medicare trustees (April)



# Take a Break: Part 3!

Pause

Stretch

Jot down your questions on the materials so far

# Top-Ticket Issues: Farm Bill: Not (Just) About Farming

Perhaps the biggest bill to be taken up by Congress in 2023 will be the renewal of the Farm Bill

Last renewed in 2018

Domestic nutrition programs make up 84% of bill's budget baseline, up from 76% in 2018

Programs to be renewed include SNAP, Farmers Market programs including Senior, Commodity Supplemental Food Program



# Farm Bill (cont.)

Expected to be a tough fight

SNAP at the center – proposals include eligibility changes, harsher work requirements

Before getting to Farm Bill, we are now facing more immediate crisis with SNAP

Extra pandemic funding ending across the nation by the end of month with many states already stopped, including Ohio





## We can't throw older adults over a hunger cliff

BY BOB BLANCATO AND RAMSEY ALWIN, OPINION CONTRIBUTORS - 03/02/23 2:00 PM ET

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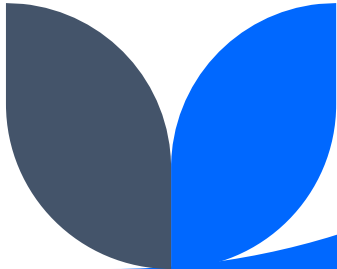


Photo by YUKI IWAMURA/AFP via Getty Images

It couldn't be more ironic and cruel that over 40 million Americans are facing deep cuts in their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

### Most Popular

- 1 **Nastiest Trump r... with De!**
- 2 **Moody's downgr... banks fo**
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# Farm Bill (cont.)

The Farm Bill will implement recommendations from the 2022 White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health

Among the key older adult recommendations:

- Increasing funding for OAA nutrition programs

- Universal screening for food insecurity in federal health care systems and expanding access to nutrition counseling

- Creating an aging and nutrition research agenda within ACL

Sen. Brown key member of Senate Ag committee—make contact early

Reps. Miller and Brown on House Ag



# Top-Ticket Issues: Elder Justice

Our two priorities as the Elder Justice Coalition

Funding for APS and long-term care ombudsman

Final funding bill included \$15 million for APS in a first time-line item under the ACL budget for FY 2023

Priority is to build off that to at least \$80 million for this fiscal year

LTCOP final funding level for FY 2023 was just under \$22 million

Want to see that increased to at least \$36 million

Have been in contact with appropriators; please contact Reps. Joyce and Kaptur



# Elder Justice (cont.)

## Reauthorization of the Elder Justice Act of 2010

The House in November 2021 did pass an excellent Elder Justice Reauthorization and Modernization Act

However, the Senate never followed suit

And when a session of Congress ends without action being finalized—have to start all over in new Congress

Have had bipartisan conversations with House and Senate;  
our goal is a bipartisan bill

Contact Sen. Brown and Reps. Carey and  
Wenstrup on the Finance/Ways & Means  
Committees!



# Other Top-Ticket Issues: In Brief

Medicare Advantage oversight

Comprehensive workforce legislation tied to immigration reform

More work on SDOH and looking ahead to OAA reauthorization

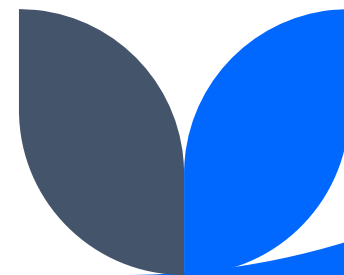
Medicaid reform

Future of telehealth

Greater focus on dual eligibles

Long term care

Cross cutting issue of health equity



# In Closing

Washington is not a dull place to be right now

Divided government provides opportunity?

Can bipartisanship of 2022 continue?

Resulted in gun safety bill, infrastructure, veterans' health,  
Chips Act and support for Ukraine



# In Closing (cont.)

Advocacy is more important than ever, especially in the aging space

More than ever, we need to be bipartisan and up to date with data and stories

Preaching to the choir on that but never hurts to remind



# Resources

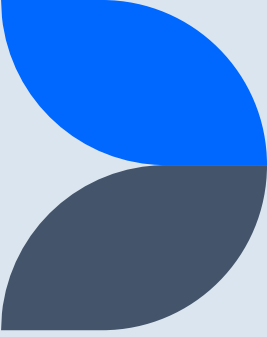
President's budget proposal for ACL: <https://acl.gov/about-acl/budget>

Federal and state legislators, bills and explainers:  
<http://govtrack.us>

NANASP: <http://nanasp.org>

Elder Justice Coalition: <http://elderjusticecoalition.com>

White House Conference page: <https://bit.ly/WHhungerconf>







# Thank you!

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