

April 22, 2015

To: Chairman, DCOA budget oversight hearing

From: Emmy Lu Daly

Re: Proposed cuts in funding for the elderly

My name is Emmy Lu Daly, I am 91 years old, a veteran of WWII and a resident of Sarah's Circle for 20 years. Sarah's Circle is a residential facility providing apartments for District of Columbia seniors with limited incomes where they can maintain their independent living, have community with others and enjoy stimulating programs.

Through my long and satisfying residence here, I have become aware of the many essential services our District government has provided for the D.C. seniors. However, I am alarmed at some of the proposed cuts in the budget and in particular, the cut in food services for housebound seniors. Hunger is a basic need for every human being. For seniors it may not be a question of managing that need by themselves; they may not be physically able to go out and obtain the necessary foods. Statistics show that poverty is increasing in the District and that includes in the elderly. Many of the elderly folk here in the city have lived here a lifetime, paid their taxes, maintained their homes and served their communities in many positive ways. These people deserve to have food delivered to them or made available through subsidized food services. Don't take away this one very essential need by cutting back the current services but rather increase the budget to meet the increasing need.

About the cutting back on the services of the senior centers, I can speak to the health and well-being of the residents in Sarah's Circle who participate in the programs provided for fun, stimulation and socializing. Folks shouldn't be stuck in their rooms, apartments, homes all weekend. The senior centers should be available to those people, many of whom only get their contact with other people through meeting others at the centers.

And one more point. Let's avoid considering the elderly as a "problem". We are people who deserve respect and have given and continue to contribute to our society. We are important. Please don't sell us short.