



Lifespan Respite Care Act (P.L. 109-442)
Funding Alert
Need Immediate Congressional Sign-ons



The Lifespan Respite Care Act authorizes competitive grants to state agencies working in concert with Aging and Disability Resource Centers and non-profit state respite coalitions or organizations to make quality respite available and accessible to family caregivers regardless of age or disability through the establishment of State Lifespan Respite Systems.

Appropriations Status: The Lifespan Respite Care Act received first-time funding (\$2.5 million) in FY 09 and level funding in FY 2010. The President recommended \$5 million for FY 2011. However, the law authorizes Congress to spend \$94.8 million in FY 2011. Reps. Langevin (D-RI) and Lee Terry (R-NE) are circulating a letter to Members of Congress asking them to join in their request to House Appropriators for full funding of \$94.8 m.

Implementation Status: Twelve states received Lifespan Respite grants from the US Administration on Aging (AoA) in FY09 to jump start development of statewide respite systems. AoA expects to solicit additional grantees in spring 2010 (see www.archrespite.org).



→ **Action:** Contact your Representatives today and urge them to sign onto the attached letter to the House Appropriations Committee requesting full funding (\$94.8 m) for Lifespan Respite in FY11. To reach your legislator, call 1-202-225-3121 and ask for the Member's office. If you don't know your Representative, please visit www.house.gov and type in your zip code to retrieve contact information.

→ **Message:** **Thank you for your ongoing support for Lifespan Respite and the needs of family caregivers.** As a Member of Congress, please sign the attached letter to Chairman Obey (D-WI) and Ranking Member Tiahrt (R-KS) of the House Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations Subcommittee urging them to include full funding for Lifespan Respite in the FY 2011 Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations bill. With health care reform still pending, long-term care solutions tentative at best, and an economic recession that is exacerbating the challenges for the nation's family caregivers, respite is a necessary cost-effective action.



Over for More Talking Points

Respite Among Most Critically Necessary and Beneficial Family Support Services

Respite Need is Great, Supply Limited.

- Respite, the most frequently requested support service, has been shown to provide family caregivers with relief necessary to maintain their own health, bolster family stability, keep marriages intact, and avoid or delay more costly nursing home or foster care placements. Yet, respite is in short supply or inaccessible for all age and disability groups.
- The nation's 65 million family caregivers provide 80% of long-term care. Caring for the aging population is a growing problem, but currently more than half of care recipients (56%) are under age 75. Caregiving is a lifespan issue. These family caregivers provide an estimated \$375 billion in uncompensated care, an amount almost as high as Medicare spending (\$432 billion in 2007) and more than total spending for Medicaid, including federal and state contributions and medical and long-term care (\$311 billion in 2005).

Respite can be a tool in economic recovery.

- In these times of serious budget constraints, the economic value of respite is exceptional. Delaying nursing home or institutional care of just one individual with a chronic condition for several months can save Medicaid, private insurance, or the family tens of thousands of dollars.
- American businesses lose \$17.1 to \$33.6 billion annually in lost productivity costs related to caregiving responsibilities. Respite can help alleviate some of the stress working caregivers face.
- Lifespan Respite programs can also be an economic stimulus by creating more jobs, since they are required to conduct respite provider recruitment and training.

Lifespan Respite is Demonstrated Success

- The Lifespan Respite Care Program is based on model systems in Alabama, Arizona, Oregon, Nebraska, Tennessee, Wisconsin and Oklahoma, which provide easy access to affordable, quality respite; ensure flexibility to meet diverse needs; and assist with locating, training, and paying respite providers.
- State Lifespan Respite programs have been cited as exemplary by the National Conference of State Legislators and highlighted by the National Governor's Association and the White House Conference on Aging.
- No other federal program mandates respite as its sole focus; helps ensure respite quality or choice; or allows funds for respite start-up, training and coordination regardless of age or disability.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 23, 2010

*Assist Families Caring for Loved Ones
With Disabilities and Chronic Conditions*

Support Respite Care Programs in FY11

***This is a programmatic request and does not
require a Member disclosure form***

Dear Colleague,

On behalf of our nation's family caregivers, we urge you to join us in sending the attached letter to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies requesting the fully authorized amount of **\$94.81 million in funding for the Lifespan Respite Care Act programs in FY 2011**. As this program's authorization is slated to expire in FY 2011, it is more important than ever that the program receive robust funding to ensure its continuing success. The President has made support for family caregiving, including increased funding for Lifespan Respite, a central component of his Middle Class Initiative.

In 2007, the economic value of uncompensated family caregiving to the U.S. economy was estimated at \$375 billion. This amount is more than total Medicaid spending in 2007, including both federal and state contributions for both medical and long-term care (\$311 billion).

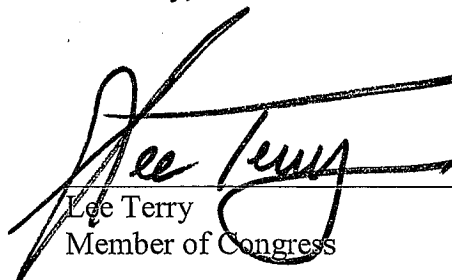
Respite care, which provides temporary relief from continuous caregiving, decreases the need for professional long-term care, resulting in significant savings for the health care system and taxpayers. Access to respite services has also been shown to improve caregiver health and well-being, promote family stability, avoid or delay more costly out-of-home placements and reduce the likelihood of abuse and neglect. And since the Lifespan Respite program requires states to recruit and train respite care workers, it can help create more jobs.

We encourage you to join us in supporting over 50 million family caregivers by signing onto the attached letter. For more information or to sign on to this letter, please contact Todd Adams (Langevin) at 5-2735, or Tessie Abraham (Terry) at 5-4155.

Sincerely,



Jim Langevin
Member of Congress



Lee Terry
Member of Congress

March XX, 2010

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor,
Health & Human Services, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor,
Health & Human Services, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt,

As you prepare the FY2011 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill, we ask that the House include the fully authorized level of \$94.81 million for *Lifespan Respite Care Act* (PL 109-442) programs.

Respite care, the most frequently requested family support service, provides temporary relief from continuous caregiving of family members with disabilities or chronic conditions. It has been shown to provide family caregivers with the relief necessary to maintain their own health, balance work and family, bolster family stability, keep marriages intact, and avoid or delay more costly nursing home or foster care placements.

Following its widely supported enactment in 2006, *Lifespan Respite Care* was first funded at \$2.5 million in Fiscal Years 2009 and 2010. The President's Fiscal Year 2011 Budget submission included \$5 million for Lifespan Respite Care, the first enhancement of funding since the program's enactment. We are very appreciative and encouraged by the President's recommendation given today's challenging budgetary climate. However, his recommendations focused on the needs of family caregivers of the aging population. The fact is that more than half (56%) of the nation's care recipients with a disabling or chronic condition are under age 75 and 28% are under age 50. Even with the proposed increase in Lifespan Respite, the funding remains inadequate to meet the needs in our communities.

As the only federal program to address respite accessibility and affordability issues for families regardless of age or disability, it serves a critical and unique purpose. The nation's estimated 50 million family caregivers provide about 80% of long-term care in the United States. A recent AARP study estimates the economic value of uncompensated family caregiving at \$375 billion -- more than total Medicaid spending, including both federal and state contributions for both medical and long-term care in 2007. Moreover, in these times of serious budget constraints, respite provides a valuable tool to aid in economic recovery and even create more jobs as respite providers are recruited and trained.

For families and individuals who may not qualify for any public or private respite funding, including children with severe disabilities, teens with serious emotional and psychological conditions, and adults with Multiple Sclerosis, ALS, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injuries, cancer, Alzheimer's and many other chronic physical and mental health conditions, these programs may be holding out the only helping hand. For our wounded veterans returning home from war with traumatic brain injuries and other polytraumas, Lifespan Respite systems could be the lifeline their families must turn to in their new roles as life-long family caregivers.

The Lifespan Respite Care Act is the only federal program that stands ready to meet these needs with funds for respite start-up, training, and coordination. We urge you to include full funding for the program at \$94.81 million in its last year of authorization. We look forward to working with you on cost-effective and proven ways to support the nation's family caregivers, who are the backbone of our long-term care system.

Sincerely,