**Getting Public Officials to Take Notice**

With the cost of living going up, many older adults on a fixed income are struggling to afford basic needs like food, medicine, housing, utilities, and transportation. Many elected officials are trying to step up and help their constituents access the assistance they need. [Boost Your Budget Week](https://www.ncoa.org/article/boost-your-budget-week) is an ideal occasion for them to provide additional information on federal benefits that can help older adults with their health and economic security.

Elected officials and their staffers will have varying levels of understanding about your work and your direct community support of older adults, including Boost Your Budget Week and [BenefitsCheckUp.org](http://www.BenefitsCheckUp.org). It’s important to tell them that:

1. Boost Your Budget Week is a non-partisan educational campaign to encourage eligible older adults to apply for benefits programs to pay for food, medicine, transportation, and utilities.
2. [$30 billion](https://www.ncoa.org/article/30-billion-left-on-the-table-connecting-more-older-adults-with-money-saving-public-benefits) in benefits go unclaimed every year because eligible older adults are unaware that these programs exist or how to apply.
3. [BenefitsCheckUp](https://www.benefitscheckup.org) is a free and confidential website, available 24 hours a day, that is managed by the National Council on Aging, a respected and trusted nonprofit that has been serving older adults for 70 years.

There are three facts that make your organization a prime community partner for elected officials looking to connect with their constituents:

1. Older Americans continue to struggle from rising inflation.
2. Aging is not a partisan issue.
3. Your organization is a local expert in aging. Many elected officials would be happy to work with you to assist the older adults you collectively serve. This is the opportunity to educate them about your goals and successes and ways you can work together to serve your communities.

The best way to communicate with your elected officials is by email and then a follow-up call one week later. You also need to enlist the right person on their staff. Start by getting contact information for your elected official from your town, city, county, or state websites.

* Use a search engine to find contact information for your Senators and Representatives.
* Call the closest local office and ask for the contact information of the staff person responsible for local scheduling.
* Email your invitation and be sure to follow up via phone and/or email. See our tips on [How to Get an Elected Official to Your Event](https://www.ncoa.org/article/how-to-get-an-elected-official-to-attend-your-event).
* Use NCOA’s [Advocacy Basics](https://www.ncoa.org/advocates/public-policy/advocacy-basics) for additional ideas to engage your elected officials.
* Email NCOA’s Public Policy & Advocacy staff ([advocacy@ncoa.org](mailto:advocacy@ncoa.org)) to tell them about your communication with any political staff members. They can suggest questions for you to ask members of Congress and materials for you to share.

**Sample Email to Your Elected Officials**

Dear [SEN./REP. LAST NAME]:

April 15-19, 2024 is [Boost Your Budget Week](https://ncoa.org/article/boost-your-budget-week), sponsored by the [National Council on Aging](http://www.ncoa.org) (NCOA). This nationwide educational initiative is designed to encourage eligible older adults to access billions of dollars in benefits to pay for housing, utilities, medicine, food, and transportation. Every year, [$30 billion](https://ncoa.org/article/30-billion-left-on-the-table-connecting-more-older-adults-with-money-saving-public-benefits) in benefits goes unclaimed because older adults are unaware that these programs exist or how to apply.

[ORGANIZATION] has already helped [#] of our older neighbors access [$X] in benefits over the past [X YEARS], but we know there are many more who can benefit. [ORGANIZATION] is hosting [DESCRIBE EVENT] to raise awareness of how older adults can Boost Your Budget with benefits, and we would be honored for you to join us on [DATE]. [EVENT] will take place at [TIME] in [LOCATION]. We are working to empower our older residents to remain in our community and live with dignity and financial security. We would love for you to be part of this!

We also look forward to hearing about your activities in Congress to benefit older Americans.

Please contact me at [PHONE] or [EMAIL] to arrange your visit or if you need additional information. Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration of this invitation.

Sincerely,

[ORGANIZATION DIRECTOR]

**Sample Boost Your Budget Week Proclamation**

Ask your mayor and other local officials to consider issuing a proclamation in honor of Boost Your Budget Week. It’s a great way to get publicity and recognition. You can share the following sample proclamation with them, so they know what to include:

[NAME OF CITY/COUNTY/STATE]

Whereas, older Americans are significant members of our society, investing their wisdom and experience to help enrich and better the lives of younger generations; but many of them, despite having worked hard all their lives, find themselves struggling financially.

Whereas, there are $30 billion in federal, state, and local benefits that go unclaimed every year and these programs can help older adults pay for medicine, utilities, food, transportation, and other needs so they can live with economic security.

Whereas [ORGANIZATION] has acted as a catalyst to improve the lives of many of our older residents in [CITY/COUNTY/STATE] by educating and connecting them to these critical benefits.

Now, therefore, I [NAME OF OFFICIAL] do hereby proclaim April 15-19, 2024 as Boost Your Budget Week, in partnership with [ORGANIZATION] and the National Council on Aging.

And call upon all citizens to engage and support efforts by [ORGANIZATION] that ensure our older residents are aware of where and how they can seek assistance, so they can age with dignity and independence.

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[Mayor/County Official/Governor] Signed in [City/County/State]

This \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ day of April 2024