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December 6, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

BO CALLAWAY

FROM:

FRED SLIGHT *FS*

SUBJECT:

Issues Concerning Senior  
Citizens



Older Americans Amendments

The President signed on November 28, 1975, the Older Americans Amendments of 1975. As amended, the Older Americans Act provides certain principles to guide government in dealing with the problems of the senior citizen:

- a. Emphasis will be placed on making services available which will enable older persons to live at home as long as possible.
- b. Community leaders who best know the needs of their own areas will determine the services for older persons to be started or strengthened.
- c. The needs of low income, older persons, including minorities, will be given priority in use of Federal funds.
- d. Efforts will be made to enlist volunteers from all age groups to assist in serving older persons.
- e. The resources now available to meet the needs of older persons will continue to be coordinated through programs administered by a number of Federal departments and agencies.
- f. Emphasis will be placed on opening opportunities for older persons to continue to participate constructively in the life of our nation.

As a historical matter, the President supported the Older Americans Act when first enacted by Congress ten years ago, and voted for subsequent amendments to the Act.

Inflation

One of the groups most ravaged by the problems of inflation are our senior citizens. The President's effective leadership in dealing with the problems of the economy has been of a significant benefit to these senior individuals of limited income, particularly in regard

to the reductions that have taken place in the cost of living (from 12.2% in 1974 to an annualized rate of 6% in 1975).

### Crime

The President's great concern on the increase in crime was reflected in his message to Congress last June wherein he called for:

- a. An end to "Saturday Night Specials" that have no use other than against human beings.
- b. The establishment of mandatory sentencing for persons convicted of violent Federal crimes.
- c. An extension of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration authorizing up to \$6.8 billion of Federal aid, to assist State and local authorities in fighting crime.
- d. An increase of more than fifty new Federal judges in order to better insure that criminals may be more rapidly brought to trial.

Perhaps most importantly, the President firmly believes that it is time for the law to concern itself with the rights of the very persons for whom they were designed to protect.

### Health

The President recognizes the rapid increases in the cost of medical care for the elderly and has directed that a careful re-examination of the potential of National Health Insurance be made to assure both access to quality care, and to better contain the total cost of health care.

