



Elder Justice Coalition

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Elder Justice Coalition Commemorates the 15th Anniversary of the Elder Justice Act

March 23rd marked the 15th anniversary of the signing into law of the Elder Justice Act (EJA). The Elder Justice Coalition is proud to celebrate this milestone by championing the EJA's success and reflecting on the work ahead. Our coalition has served as the national advocacy voice for elder justice in America since the EJA's original introduction. The EJA is a landmark law providing the first coordinated and comprehensive federal response to the growing problem of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The EJA has led to heightened awareness, stronger advocacy, and improved elder abuse protection frameworks for older Americans. Among the law's highlights are

- Successful implementation of the Elder Justice Coordinating Council, now fourteen federal agencies strong.
- Development and usage of the National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System (NAMRS), providing critical data to help us understand the incidences of elder abuse.
- A new line item for Adult Protective Services in the Administration for Community Living budget.

The challenge we face is securing reauthorization of the EJA. Under the leadership of Senator Ron Wyden, former Senator Bob Casey, Representative Richard Neal, and Representative Suzanne Bonamici, the Elder Justice Reauthorization and Modernization Act was introduced in the last Congress. We expect reintroduction in 2025 and will work to secure bipartisan support and passage.

On this 15th anniversary we honor those individuals in Adult Protective Services and the Long-term Care Ombudsman Program for their essential work to both help victims of elder abuse and to prevent future victimization. We also appreciate the work of the National Aging Network and multidisciplinary teams towards addressing and preventing elder abuse.

The Elder Justice Coalition is proud to be a nonpartisan voice working to prevent elder abuse. We appreciate the work of our fellow state, local, and tribal elder justice coalitions. Our collective work is on behalf of the most vulnerable older adults who deserve a world free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

We are proud to share comments from the Elder Justice Coalition's Leadership commemorating the EJA's anniversary:

Jennifer Spoeri, Executive Director, and Bill Benson, National Policy Advisor, National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA):

NAPSA is honored to join our colleague organizations in the Elder Justice Coalition in celebrating the enactment into law of the Elder Justice Act (EJA) 15 years ago. This

landmark law, the first significant federal law addressing abuse, neglect and exploitation of the nation's older population, is especially noteworthy for its importance to states' adult protective services (APS) programs by creating the first-ever federal office to support APS, and the first-ever authorization of direct funding to states to support their APS programs. While the full promise of the EJA is far from fully realized, it has had a major positive impact on every state's APS program, and as a result, the many thousands of older and disabled adults who suffer each year from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Karen Jones, Chair of the Board of Directors, National Association of Local Long Term Care Ombudsman (NALLTCO):

On the anniversary of the federal Elder Justice Act, NALLTCO stands united in celebrating this critical piece of legislation that has advanced the fight against elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The Elder Justice Act has strengthened our ability to advocate for vulnerable older adults who reside in long term care facilities, ensuring that they receive the care, dignity, and respect they deserve. As we reflect on the progress made, we remain committed to working alongside our partners to continue promoting a safe and just environment for all individuals in long-term care. Together, we will continue to uphold the rights of older adults and foster a future where they can age with confidence and security.

Ramsey Alwin, President and CEO, National Council on Aging (NCOA):

NCOA is proud to have been part of the campaign that led to the 2010 passage of the Elder Justice Act. Fifteen years later, we continue to raise awareness and educate older adults and their caregivers on how they can avoid scams and prevent fraud. With new scams appearing daily, we must continuously empower people with knowledge to protect themselves and those they care for.

The Steering Committee of the National Network of State Elder Justice Coalitions (NNSEJC):

We, at the National Network of State Elder Justice Coalitions, are delighted to acknowledge the fifteenth anniversary of the Elder Justice Act and applaud all involved in its passage and implementation. This important bill, for the first time, acknowledges the full magnitude of elder abuse and its complexity. The Elder Justice Coordinating Council, established under the EJA, serves as a multidisciplinary and multi-factorial force for systems improvement at the national level and is a model and inspiration for state elder justice coordinating councils and coalitions. The EJA further reframed elder abuse (or protection from it) as a right and vulnerable adults as rights-holders.

Patricia Hunter, President, National State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs (NASOP):

NASOP salutes the Elder Justice Act on its 15th Anniversary. We commend the Elder Justice Coalition led by Mr. Bob Blancato, his team and all who have fought to end the shameful and often underrecognized abuse of older adults around the country. NASOP is proud to have played a role in developing and supporting the EJC. We continue to fight for the Elder Justice Act funding each year, and for the critical reauthorization which recommits our nation to ending elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Patrick Cush, Executive Director, and Dr. Sheri Gibson, Vice Chair, Pikes Peak Elder Justice Center:

At The Pikes Peak Elder Justice Center, we see firsthand the profound impact of elder abuse and the importance of robust protections, resources, and education to prevent harm and support survivors. While the Elder Justice Act laid a foundation for progress, we know there is still much work to be done. The growing population of older adults, combined with persistent gaps in funding and services, calls for renewed efforts at every level—local, state, and national—to uphold and expand the protections envisioned by this legislation.

On this anniversary, we reaffirm our commitment to advocating for policies that strengthen elder justice initiatives, supporting caregivers as frontline responders, and ensuring that every older adult in our community can age with dignity, free from harm. We call upon policymakers, service providers, and the public to join us in this mission. Protecting our elders is not just a legal obligation—it is a moral imperative.

Sandy Markwood, CEO, USAging:

On the 15th anniversary of the passage of the Elder Justice Act, USAging and the nation's 614 Area Agencies on Aging recognize the advances in policy, practices and programs that have been made since then and the challenges our nation still faces to prevent elder abuse, neglect or exploitation. Policymakers at all levels of an aging nation must prioritize these complex but solvable issues, which speaks to the importance of the Elder Justice Act.

There is much work to do going forward, with the most critical first step of reauthorization of the EJA. This effort includes gathering bipartisan support to address this national crisis.

Sincerely,



Bob Blancato
National Coordinator
Elder Justice Coalition