

**HEARING ON THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE  
OLDER AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM:  
HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
HUMAN RESOURCES OF THE COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION AND LABOR, HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES, 103RD CONGRESS, 1ST  
SESSION; MARCH 24, 1993. SERIAL NO. 103-6**

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# VARIOUS

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OF THE  
**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, MARCH 24, 1993

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## HEARING ON THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE OLDER AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 1993

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES,  
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR,  
*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:05 p.m., Room 2261, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Matthew G. Martinez, Chairman, presiding.

Members present: Representatives Martinez, Scott, Woolsey, Baesler, Molinari, and Barrett.

Staff present: Lester Sweeting, subcommittee staff director/counsel; Dan Adcock, senior legislative assistant; Jennifer Amstutz, staff assistant; and Lee Cowen, minority professional staff member.

Chairman MARTINEZ. With the appearance of another member of the subcommittee, we are now legal. So I'll go ahead and proceed. We're going to be joined very shortly by our ranking member on the subcommittee, or acting ranking member, Susan Molinari. I want to thank each and every one of you for coming today, and I want to thank those of you that are witnesses today for sharing your concerns and your points of view with us, the Subcommittee on Human Resources. I believe that the programs that we're addressing here today represent among the strongest kinds of investment that we can make as a Nation in this valuable and important resource of ours, our senior citizens. The paybacks in services and continued vitality of our older Americans results in immediate and dramatic dividends. We have seen them, and all of you have seen them at work. They provide healthier seniors, happier citizens, and excellent support for program recipients.

At any rate, this hearing is the first in a series of hearings that will be held here and around the country. And with us today on our first panel are the presidents of three major national associations that deal with the three volunteer programs operated under the Act. Also with us on the second panel are the directors and volunteers operating at the delivery points of these programs.

The Older American Volunteers Programs, as many of you know, represent a major investment by the Federal Government, working together with States and local governments and local community groups to maximize the involvement of our seniors in their communities.

These programs include three separate and distinct activities. The Retired Senior Volunteers Program provides an opportunity

for persons 60 years of age and over to give of their time, expertise, and interest to a wide range of volunteer efforts.

Volunteers in this program range from the age of 60 to the 90s. Working through community action agencies, nonprofit, groups and other service deliverers, they apply their skills in the widest range of activities. The program is designed to benefit the volunteer participants by ensuring that they have an outlet for their tremendous resources of energy and talent, and that they can continue to make a worthwhile contribution to society and to the community.

There are two specialized programs that will also be addressed here today. The Foster Grandparent Program has a dual purpose. Low income seniors are selected, trained, and provided with a small cash supplement and other benefits in exchange for their services as caregivers to children with special needs. Foster Grandparents work in a wide variety of situations where they can provide support to children with special needs, including children who are incarcerated or institutionalized.

Senior Companions, another program, are also drawn from the poor senior population. These volunteers provide companionship and nontechnical services to other seniors who are at risk of loss of independence or in danger of institutionalization because of frailty.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Matthew G. Martinez follows.]

STATEMENT OF HON. MATTHEW G. MARTINEZ, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM  
THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Good afternoon.

Today we begin the reauthorization process for the Older American Volunteers Programs under Title II of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973. These programs were last reauthorized in 1990 and are due to expire on September 30, 1993. As we will hear from our witnesses, the programs funded under the Act are investments in our senior citizens resources in order to provide services and benefits to them both as participants and recipients. This hearing is only the first in a series that will be held here and around the country this year.

With us today on the first panel are the presidents of the three major national associations that deal with the three volunteer programs operating under the Act. Also with us on the second panel are directors and volunteers operating at the delivery points of these programs.

The Older American Volunteers Programs represent a major investment by the Federal Government, working together with States and local governments and local community groups to maximize the involvement of seniors in their communities. These programs include three separate and distinct activities. The Retired Senior Volunteers Program provides an opportunity for persons 60 years of age and over to give of their time, expertise and interest to a wide range of volunteer efforts. Volunteers in this program range in age from 60 to the nineties. Working through community action agencies, non-profit groups and other service deliverers, they apply their skills in the widest range of activities. The program is designed to benefit the volunteer participants by ensuring that they have an outlet for their tremendous resources of energy and talent and that they can continue to make a worthwhile contribution to society and the community.

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Senior companions are also drawn from the poor senior population. These volunteers provide companionship and non-technical services to other seniors who are at risk of loss of independence or in danger of institutionalization because of frailty.

Our first panel is made up of the three representatives of the National Associations of Project Directors. I welcome you and look forward to your testimony. First,

however, I would like to ask if our distinguished acting ranking member, Congresswoman Susan Molinari, and the other members of the subcommittee have statements. Ms. Molinari.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Before I call on our first panel, I would like to ask any of the other members of our committee if they have opening statements.

Lynn.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to commend you for holding a hearing on such a vitally important topic. I'd also like to extend a hearty welcome to our distinguished panel and to recognize Mr. Freedman who does a really wonderful job. He works near my district. I'm in Marin and Sonoma County; you're in Berkeley. We also like to see what's happening over there.

Seniors programs enhance the lives of so many Americans, both for those who receive the services and those who provide them. It's obvious that the money that the Federal Government spends on these programs is an investment. It serves to protect and cultivate a precious natural resource, our seniors.

With the constant evolution of the family in this country, one of the gravest consequences of the recent dissolution of many extended family networks is the lack of intergenerational communication. Young people have so much to learn from the wisdom of those Americans who have lived through other experiences such as the horrors of war, through the Civil Rights movement, the Great Society, and those watershed events that have so distinctly shaped American society.

Programs such as the Foster Grandparents and RSVP do so much to preserve intergenerational education. I wholeheartedly support efforts to expand the programs to include more seniors who wish to serve their communities.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you, Ms. Woolsey. Aside from being a Californian and giving us the distinct advantage outnumbering the other members of the panel and the various States they come from, it's a delight to have you on the committee.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you.

Chairman MARTINEZ. I'd like to introduce at this time Scotty Baesler from Kentucky. Scotty has a background as a mayor of Lexington, Kentucky, of having worked with many of the programs that he'll be dealing with here in Congress on this committee.

Interestingly enough, he has actually promoted and sponsored a program for youth that did bring all family aspects, including older Americans, into it. With that, I'd like to ask Scotty if you have an opening statement?

Mr. BAESLER. I don't at this time, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you. And joining us too, also from Virginia, a delight to have on this committee and a gentleman who also brings with him an expertise from the State government there. Bobby, do you have an opening statement?

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me begin by stating my support for the reauthorization of the Older American Volunteers Program. Since their inception, I've supported the RSVP program, the Senior Companion Program, and the Foster Grandparents Program.