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Contact: Rachel Noerdlinger
rnoerdlinger@mercuryllc.com

Contact: Derek Thomas
dthomas@fpwa.org | 212.801.1344

FPWA Analysis Reveals Trump Budget Would Harm New York City's Older Adult Population

(New York, NY) On February 12, 2018, President Trump released his fiscal year (FY) 2019 budget proposal, following through with step two of his harmful fiscal policy agenda; paying for the recently-enacted tax cuts with deep cuts to services that support low- and middle-income families, children, older adults, and people with disabilities. These services—when properly funded—strengthen the economy, improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers, and demonstrate how we as a city value opportunity and dignity.

A new report from FPWA finds that Trump's budget proposal cuts the Department for the Aging's (DFTA) \$77.4 million in federal funding by nearly \$27 million – equal to more than a third of the agency's federal funding in FY18, or 7.2 percent of the agency's \$372 million budget. The agency relies on more than a dozen federal grants, several of which are eliminated entirely in the budget proposal. These deep cuts are in addition to the decimation of direct federal assistance, such as housing, food assistance, and healthcare.

These harmful cuts could worsen economic prospects for older New Yorkers, many of whom already live on a modest fixed income, and whose population is growing rapidly. Currently, 18 percent of seniors live below the official Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and more than half live below three times the FPL (the latter being a better measure of the income required to meet basic needs). Poverty rates vary widely based on race and ethnicity; 13 percent of White older adults live in poverty compared to 19 percent of Black older adults, 24 percent of Asian older adults, and 28 percent of Hispanic/Latino older adults.

"New York's congressional delegation largely exhibited bipartisan leadership during the tax debate, and should commit to doing so during the upcoming appropriations process" **said Derek Thomas, Senior Fiscal Analyst, and report author.** "They should oppose cuts in SNAP, Medicaid, housing, and other programs, including by opposing any free-standing bill or budget resolution the same partisan reconciliation process used for repeal and replace efforts and the tax giveaways' passage. Cutting programs that help struggling families meet basic needs is not a responsible approach to addressing our nation's fiscal challenges."

"A budget is a moral document that reflects the way in which public officials express their vision, their priorities, and their commitment to the people they serve—and this administration's proposed budget makes their beliefs and intents alarmingly clear," **said Jennifer Jones Austin, FPWA CEO and Executive Director.** "What we have repeatedly witnessed from this administration



is a blatant disregard for low-and middle-income communities, including seniors, who have come to rely on the vital services provided by funding from the federal government through city agencies like DFTA, and community-based organizations. As New York City and America's older adult population continues to grow, it is imperative that we fully fund services so that people can age safely and with dignity."

FPWA has a membership network of 170 human service and faith-based organizations, many of whom serve New York's growing older adult population; providing critical services like meals, mental health, case management, and access to senior centers. The report features two members whose services—such as senior centers and workforce development—would be devastated by the President's harmful cuts.

"With more than one in four Asian American older adults living under the poverty line, and many more lacking sufficient income or retirement savings, the federal government should be prioritizing supports for this population rather than slashing them. Our federal funding allows CPC to support older adults to remain independent, productive, and engaged community members, and its critical to maintain and increase this funding as this population continues to grow," **said Wayne Ho, President & CEO of the Chinese-American Planning Council (CPC).**

You can view the policy brief online [here](#).

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About FPWA

FPWA is an anti-poverty, policy, and advocacy nonprofit with a membership network of 170 human service and faith-based organizations. For nearly a century, FPWA has been a prominent force in New York City's social services system, advocating for fair public policies, collaborating with partner agencies, and growing its community-based membership and coalition networks to meet the needs of all New Yorkers. Each year, through our network of member agencies, FPWA serves thousands of New Yorkers of all ages, ethnicities, and denominations.