

Who's Afraid of Big, Bad, DC?



USAgging Policy Conference Takeaways &
Public Policy 101

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Older Americans Act Reauthorization ...What and Why?



- The Older Americans Act (OAA) was signed in 1965 by President Johnson as an initiative aimed at eliminating poverty and injustice among the country's most vulnerable populations.
- By 2034, older adults are expected to outnumber children under 18 for the first time in history.
- People are living longer, and 85% of those 65+ want to remain in their homes and community as they age.
- Updates to the OAA are not only important but essential to meet and anticipate the ever-increasing needs.

Timeline and Key Players

- The OAA is up for reauthorization every 4 years, but not every time it's reauthorized with updates.
- This is a bipartisan issue, and both sides of the aisle are committed to updating the OAA.

Let's piece together the reality with the ask...

Budget Terms...Explain it Like I'm 5 Years Old

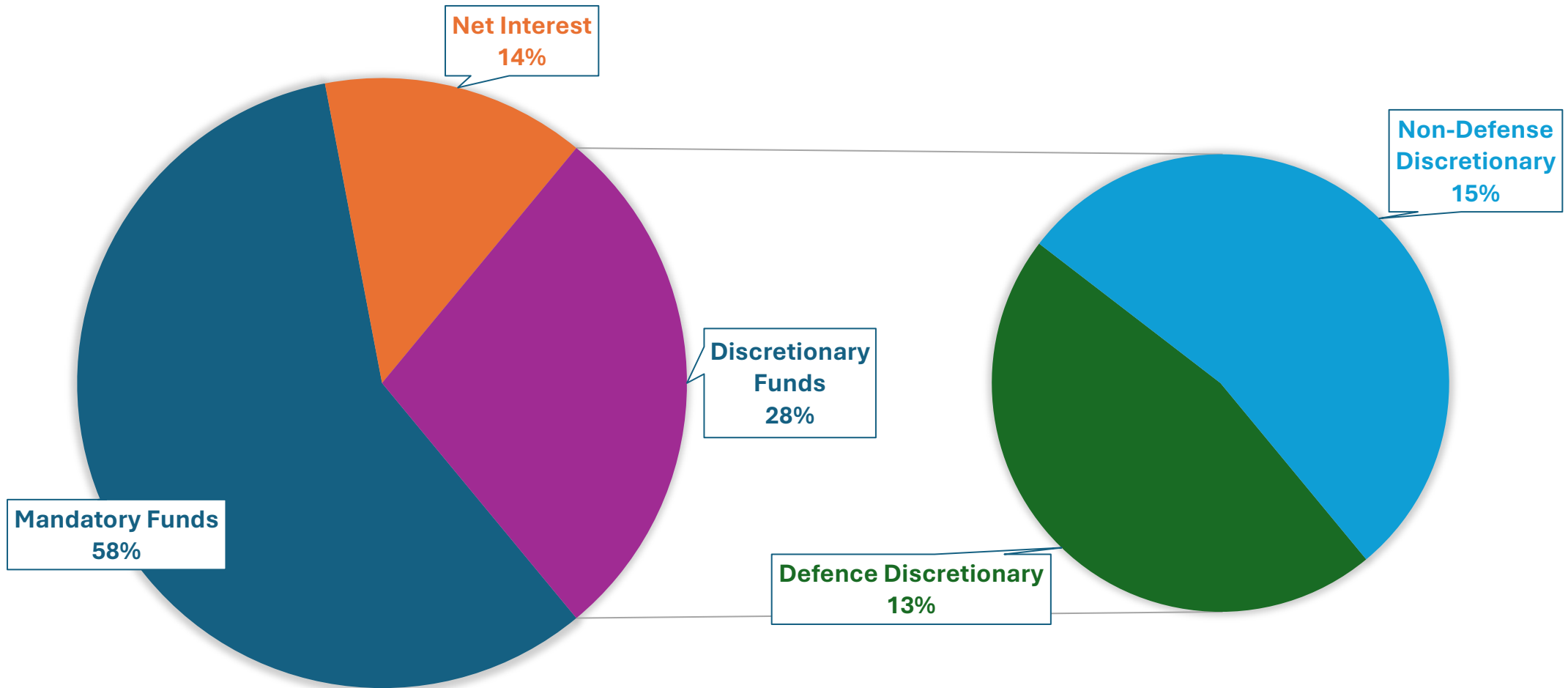
Mandatory Funds

- Direct Spending is mandated by existing laws and includes funding for entitlement programs like Medicare, Social Security, and payments to people, businesses, and State/Local governments

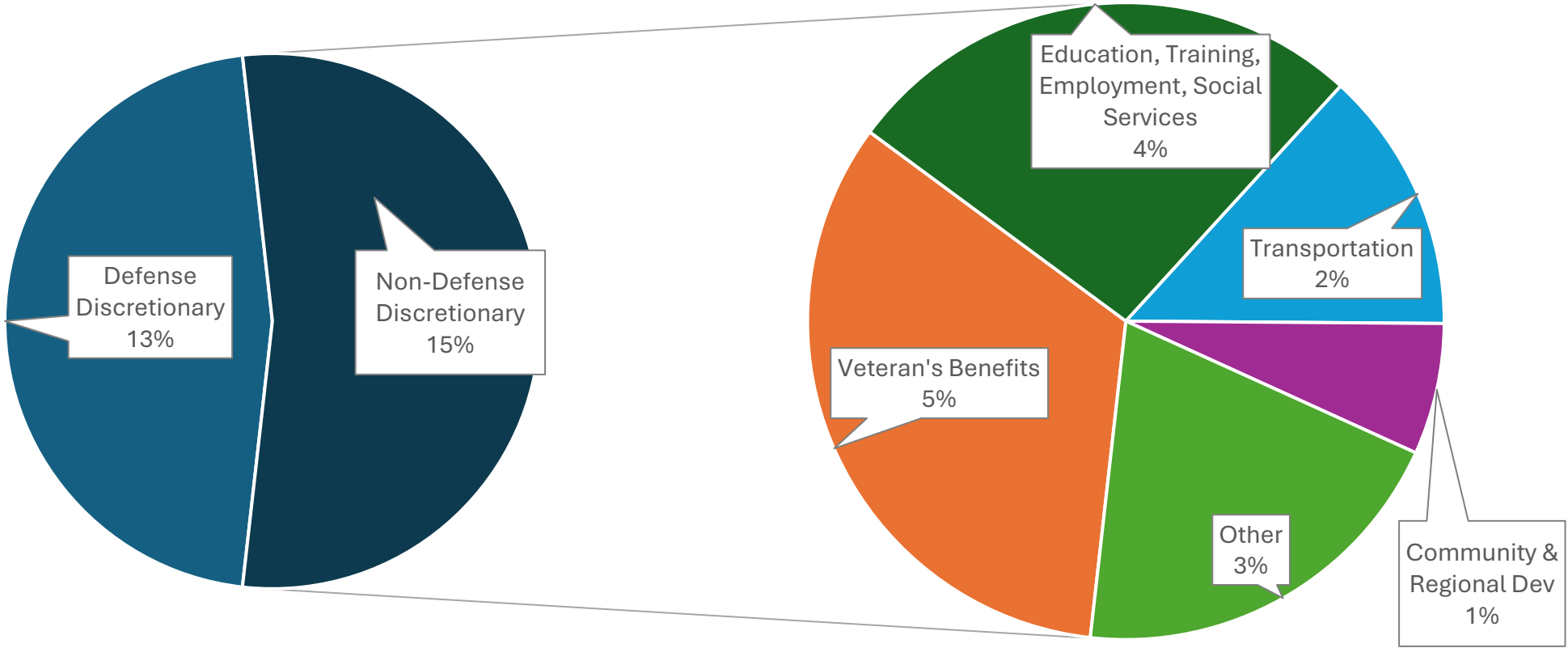
Discretionary Funds

- Approved by Congress and the President during the appropriations process each year. Congress allocates about half of these funds to the military and the other half goes towards agencies and programs like education, transportation, housing, environmental, and social service programs.

FEDERAL BUDGET FYTD24



DISC. FUNDS BREAKDOWN



- Defense Discretionary 13%
- Education, Training, Employment, Social Services
- Community & Regional Dev
- Veteran's Benefits
- Transportation
- Other

Look at these puppies for 5 seconds



USAging has been Advocating for the Following Updates to the OAA



Goal 1: Serve more Older Adults who Need Help to Age Well at Home

- 1.1 Increase authorization funding levels to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population.
- 1.2 Ensure AAAs can secure healthcare or other private funding to serve more individuals.
- 1.3 Allow Title III health & wellness programs to be evidence-informed.
- 1.4 Expand Title VI, grants for Native American Aging Programs to include a dedicated Supportive funding stream.

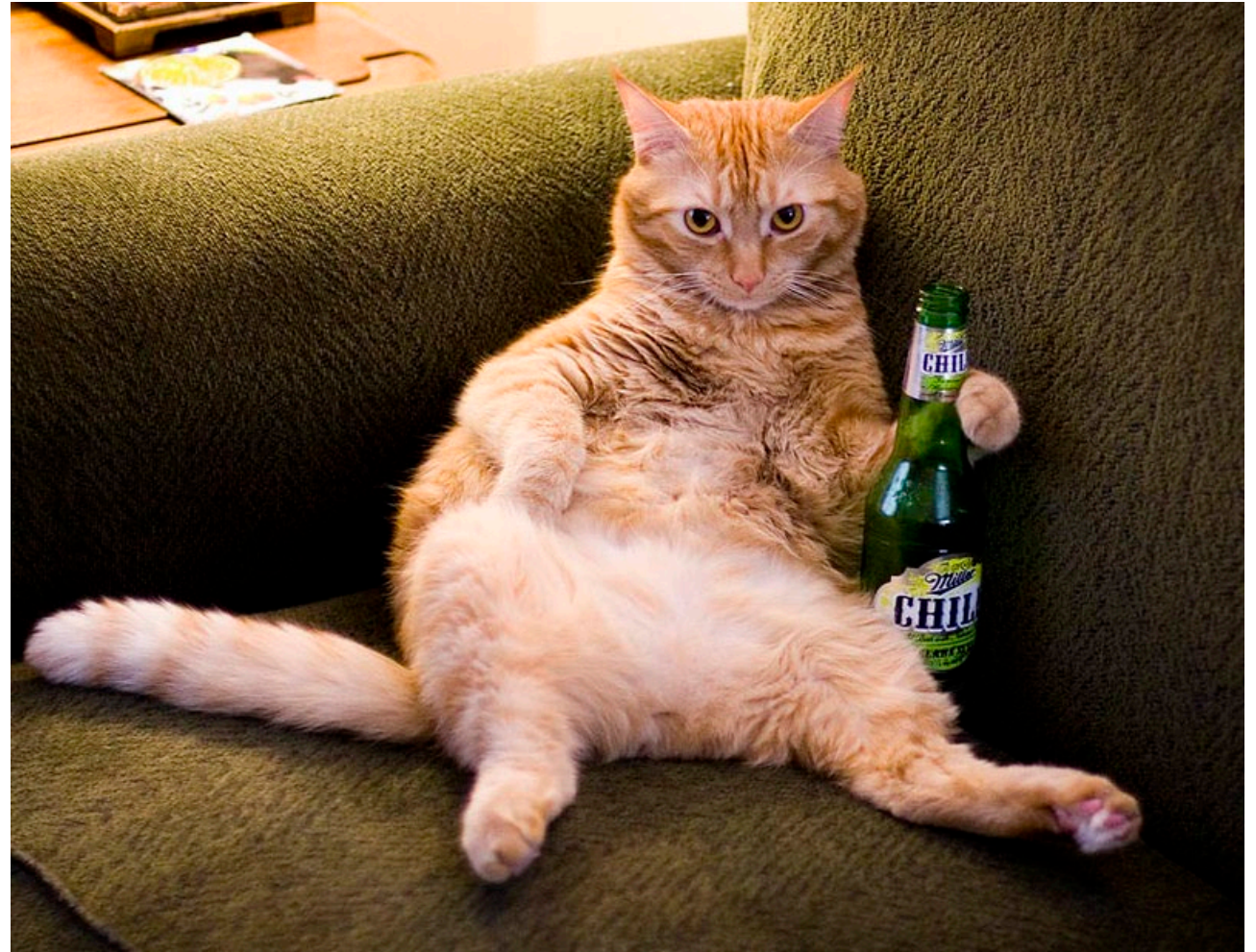
Goal 2: Meet the Needs of Today's and Tomorrow's Older Adults

- 2.1 Unify and modernize the Title III C nutrition funding streams and programs to reflect recent innovations. (Ex: Carryout Meals, virtual congregate, flexibility between C1 & C2)
- 2.2 Reduce social isolation and loneliness among older adults by authorizing a national resource center dedicated to providing training and technical assistance for Aging Network professionals on innovative strategies to build and expand social engagement programs.

Goal 3: Maintain Efficient Oversight & Management of Local Service Delivery to Ensure Quality

- 3.1 Increase administrative funding ceiling by 2% to ensure appropriate program development, oversight, and network management amid rising costs and eroding federal OAA funding.
- 3.2 In short, the Act should continue to work from the “bottom-up” as much as the “top down” to ensure AAA services and supports truly reflect the needs of older adults in their respective communities.

Look at this cat for 5 seconds



Takeaways and Benefits of Attending USAgging Policy Brief

- Connected dots
- Kind-of-sort-of helped to understand the budget
- Interact with big players in the aging field
- Better understanding of the emerging needs of the older adult population as a nation
- Got us out of our local bubble to understand what may be coming down the pipeline

We're not policy experts, but we ARE experts

We are experts in the Aging Network, and we know better than any politician the needs of those we serve.

We can give invaluable feedback and advocate for those without a voice.

What can YOU do?

- Tell Elected Officials how important the OAA is to your organization! (local, state, fed)
- Familiarize yourself with OAA funding. Read the USAging policy updates.
- Share your story and advocate!

Sandy Markwood & Amy Gotwals



Thank you!

