

This testimony is given on behalf of the Elder Justice Coalition. We are a non-partisan 3000- member coalition dedicated to advancing elder justice policy at the federal level, whether through passage and implementation of legislation or through administrative action.

We applaud the ongoing success of the Elder Justice Coordinating Council (EJCC) and we have been pleased to participate in several meetings over the four years of its existence.

This testimony focuses on two areas: the accomplishments we note from the concerns we had raised four years ago in the first white paper we wrote, and the challenges we still face as a community and as a country.

With regard to accomplishments, one area we raised was advocacy and action from within the federal government. We note the particular success of the Administration in advocating for funding for the Elder Justice Act, which received first-time appropriations in Fiscal Year 2015. We also commend the Office of Older Americans within the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, which has continued to do outstanding work in raising public awareness about elder financial abuse.

Further, we recognize the hard work of the Council itself in producing collaborations leading to items such as the creation of the Elder Justice Roadmap and the Department of Justice's Elder Justice Initiative. The continuation of the APS Resource Center and the National Center on Elder Abuse are important. The issuing of long term care ombudsman regulations and CMS's binding arbitration regulations are also part of this area. Finally, through the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act, all aging network staff and volunteers will receive training on elder abuse detection and prevention.

The EJCC and the federal government at large also have worked to leverage national partners and establish and cultivate important relationships with national networks. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and the National Center on Elder Abuse still stand out as good examples.

The Administration for Community Living is to be commended for their work on identifying short-term gaps, particularly, as we had recommended, in the areas of data collection and of finding a federal home for Adult Protective Services. These two steps are crucial for the network to come together to address this issue.

With regard to challenges, we believe that the Administration could do more to help advocate for the reauthorization of the Elder Justice Act. The longer this Act remains unauthorized, the less likely it is that it will ever receive genuine funding. The funding it has now is a start, but it is a small percentage of the funding it was authorized to receive.

Further, we still hold that an Elder Justice Advisory Board as called for in the Act could bring together multi-disciplinary national partners. This would be fairly inexpensive and would be a worthwhile endeavor. We need to continue to identify and cultivate national partners in the solution.

We still have not generated a robust public awareness campaign as called for by numerous entities, including the EJCC itself. We still believe that working with the media and with the entertainment and advertising industries, there are more resourceful ways to get a message to the American public about how we can all help stop elder abuse.

Finally, we still need more resources to coordinate the response to elder abuse, and in addition, a stronger alignment between APS and the law

enforcement community. The Office of Adult Protective Services in ACL must continue to be strengthened.

As we said in 2012, we would continue to caution the EJCC not to become too much of a Washington-only entity. Much of the work on the ground that is done in the fight against elder abuse is done at the state and local level. There are hundreds of coalitions, alliances and committees across our nation working to prevent elder abuse. We should be learning more about and from these local initiatives as part of the Council's work.

The EJCC has done much, but it still has much more to do. We hope it continues to do its work productively.