

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Vice President

For Immediate Release

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Vice President Biden Announces Release of Nearly \$100 Million in Recovery Act Funding to Support Senior Nutrition Programs

Approximately 14 million meals to be provided through Recovery Act, Funding Will Support Community Programs Struggling to Serve Seniors

Vice President Joe Biden announced today that the Department of Health and Human Services will award \$100 million in Recovery Act funding to provide meals to tens of thousands of low-income older Americans in need. The funding is expected to provide nearly 14 million meals nationwide.

"Across the country, older Americans depend on senior centers and home delivery programs for regular, healthy meals. Today, more senior citizens are in need, but the programs they depend on are on the brink of reducing their services or closing down," said Vice President Biden. "The Recovery Act will help ensure older Americans are not forced to choose between paying bills and buying food."

The Recovery Act provides \$65 million for congregate nutrition services provided at senior centers and other community sites, \$32 million for home delivered nutrition services delivered to frail elders at home and \$3 million for Native American nutrition programs. The funding will be awarded to 56 states and territories and 246 tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations. States will award the funds to organizations that provide nutrition services in their communities. Funding for nutrition programs for seniors in the Older Americans Act was initially authored and championed by Senator Edward M. Kennedy.

The Recovery Act funding comes as budget constraints have forced states and tribes to limit community-based services and critical Older Americans Act related services, including home-delivered meals. Across the country, organizations that serve senior citizens have scaled back services and limited the number of meals served per week.

(MORE)

The economic downturn has also made it difficult for many seniors to afford the right foods to keep themselves healthy and active. Additionally, many seniors may be too impaired to prepare nutritious meals for themselves. Without regular nutritious meals, the health of many older Americans declines; they become more susceptible to illness; their ability to manage their chronic diseases is reduced, and they may lose their ability to remain at home, independent in their community.

For more information about senior nutrition programs and to see a state-by-state breakdown of funding for senior nutrition programs, visit www.hhs.gov.

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The activities described in this release are being funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). To track the progress of HHS activities funded through the ARRA, visit www.hhs.gov/recovery.

To track all federal funds provided through the ARRA, visit www.recovery.gov.