

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 16, 2011

The Honorable Gene Dodaro  
Comptroller General  
U.S. Government Accountability Office  
441 G Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro,

Last March, the GAO issued the report, "Elder Justice: Stronger Federal Leadership Could Enhance National Response to Elder Abuse" which found that the federal role in promoting the rights of older adults to live free of abuse, neglect, and exploitation spans several agencies and lacks leadership. According to experts, a range of federal laws contain more than 60 provisions that could, in some way, address elder abuse. It is not clear, however, how many federal programs or other initiatives these provisions are related to or the amount of funding the federal government is investing in these activities.

Older Americans deserve to live out their lives safely and with dignity and need to be able to access competent services in their communities designed to help ensure their well-being. Given our nation's fiscal constraints coupled with the growing number of older Americans, it is vital that services for this population be provided as efficiently as possible, without unneeded fragmentation, overlap, or duplication. As a result, we would like GAO to respond to the following questions:

- What recommendations do you have to streamline elder abuse programs to reduce fragmentation, overlap or duplication,
- How should we maximize the current federal appropriations for elder abuse for better efficiencies and performance,
- What federal programs that, in some way, address elder abuse were funded in fiscal year 2011 and how much federal funding was devoted to each that year,
- How do the performance and outcomes of these programs compare, and
- What steps could be taken to improve the organization or coordination of federal support for these programs?

Please contact Alicia Hennie at [REDACTED] with Senator Corker, Steve Hutchison at [REDACTED] with Senator Brown, or Katie Adams at [REDACTED] with Senator Enzi to follow up on this request. We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Boucarrh

Scott P. Brown

Will P. Enzi