

Who's Who in Congress: Elder Justice Policy



Elder justice is a bipartisan issue. For your reference, below is a list of selected members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives from both parties who have been influential in shaping elder justice policy and who continue to have an impact in this area. The list also includes a short introduction to key congressional committees that have jurisdiction over various types of elder justice-related legislation.

SENATE LEADERS IN ELDER JUSTICE

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT)

As a member of the Judiciary Committee and the Special Committee on Aging, Sen. Blumenthal has been a champion for elder justice. He co-sponsored the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act (2017). He has also co-written letters on elder justice funding and co-sponsored World Elder Abuse Awareness Day resolutions.

Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA)

As Chair of the Senate Special Committee on Aging and former Ranking Member, Sen. Casey has made elder justice issues a priority. He is an original co-sponsor of the Elder Justice Reauthorization and Modernization Act. Last Congress, he co-led hearings on fraud and exploitation, wrote multiple reports on nursing home reform during COVID-19, co-sponsored the Older Americans Act reauthorization in 2020 and co-wrote the Aging Committee's Fraud Book.

Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME)

As former Chair of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, Sen. Collins has had a deep interest in elder justice issues. She co-wrote the Aging Committee's Fraud Book, sponsored the Senior Safe Act (2018) and co-sponsored the Promoting Alzheimer's Awareness to Prevent Elder Abuse Act (2020), and co-sponsored the Older Americans Act reauthorization in 2020. She also led multiple hearings related to fraud and exploitation during her tenure as Chair.

Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA)

As Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee and former Chair of the Finance and Judiciary Committees, Sen. Grassley has been a key champion for elder justice. He helped secure the \$100 million in elder justice funding in December 2020's COVID-19 emergency legislation and was the sponsor of the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act (2017). He also worked on COVID-19 nursing home reform legislation last Congress with Sen. Wyden (which did not ultimately become law) and published a report on COVID-19 nursing home issues. He has also co-written letters on elder justice funding and co-sponsored World Elder Abuse Awareness Day resolutions.

Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL)

Sen. Rubio sponsored the Promote Responsible Oversight and Targeted Employee Background Check Transparency for Seniors (PROTECTS) Act (S. 2214), which would give nursing facilities the ability to use the National Practitioner Data Bank in order to screen out medical staff with a known record of abuse, neglect or exploitation. He also serves on the Senate Special Committee on Aging.

Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC)

As Ranking Member of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, Sen. Scott is also in a place of power to conduct oversight and investigations into elder justice-related topics.

Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR)

As Chair of the Senate Finance Committee and former Ranking Member, Sen. Wyden has been instrumental in securing funding for elder justice programs, including the combined \$376 million in funding through COVID-19 emergency legislation since December 2020. He is currently co-leading an effort to reauthorize the Elder Justice Act, a bill entitled the Elder Justice Reauthorization and Modernization Act.

HOUSE LEADERS IN ELDER JUSTICE

Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR)

As Chair of the House Education and Labor Committee's Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Human Services and Chair of the House Elder Justice Caucus, Rep. Bonamici has sponsored and co-sponsored numerous bills impacting elder justice, including this Congress's Elder Justice Reauthorization and Modernization Act. She led the House effort to reauthorize the Older Americans Act in 2020. She has also advocated for elder justice funding within Congress and written an op-ed on elder justice.

Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT)

As Chair of the House Appropriations Committee and Chair of the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee, Rep. DeLauro has been a champion for elder justice programs including through championing increases in funding for elder justice programs and speaking about the seriousness of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Rep. Sylvia Garcia (D-TX)

Rep. Garcia sponsored the Elder Abuse Protection Act (H.R. 2922), which is a bill that amends the Elder Abuse Prevention and Prosecution Act (signed into law in 2017) that would make the Elder Justice Initiative (EJI) a permanent office within the Department of Justice (DOJ) Criminal Division, mandate that the EJI maintain and publish information to protect older adults from fraud and abuse and require the DOJ to publish EJI resources in English and Spanish. This bill has passed the full House and will be considered in the Senate.

Rep. Richard Neal (D-MA)

As Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee, Rep. Neal has also been a champion for elder justice. He was also instrumental in securing funding for elder justice programs, including the combined \$376 million in funding through COVID-19 emergency legislation since December 2020. Along with Sen. Wyden, he is currently co-leading an effort to reauthorize the Elder Justice Act, a bill entitled the Elder Justice Reauthorization and Modernization Act.

Rep. Victoria Spartz (R-IN)

Rep. Spartz is the original co-sponsor of the Elder Abuse Protection Act and has been active in supporting this legislation.

KEY COMMITTEES

Senate Finance Committee

This Committee has jurisdiction over the Elder Justice Act, Medicare, and the Social Services Block Grant, making it a key committee in any elder justice legislation.

Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee

This Committee has jurisdiction over the Older Americans Act and other health-related legislation.

Senate Judiciary Committee

This Committee has jurisdiction over any bills related to the Department of Justice.

Senate Special Committee on Aging

Though this Committee does not have jurisdiction over any legislation, it partners with other Committees and also conducts oversight and investigative activities related to older adults and persons with disabilities.

House Education and Labor Committee

This Committee has jurisdiction over the Older Americans Act.

House Judiciary Committee

Like the Senate Judiciary Committee, this Committee has jurisdiction over any bills related to the Department of Justice.

House Ways and Means Committee

Like the Senate Finance Committee, this Committee has jurisdiction over the Elder Justice Act, Medicare, and the Social Services Block Grant.

This list is only a starting point – all members of Congress can be allies in the effort to promote elder justice and prevent elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. Even if your senators or representative are not listed and/or are not on these “key” committees, you can and should educate them on the importance of supporting elder justice and preventing elder abuse in their states and communities across the nation.



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