

U.S. SENATOR BOB CASEY



CHAIRMAN Special Committee on Aging

The Addressing Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults (SILO) Act of 2023

U.S. Senators Bob Casey (D-PA) and Chris Murphy (D-CT)

Why do we need the Addressing SILO Act?

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Americans across the Nation were cut off from friends, family, and support systems, resulting in an increase in social isolation and loneliness across the lifespan. For older adults, however, social isolation and loneliness have been longstanding issues only exacerbated by the pandemic.

As of 2019, there were 54 million adults aged 65 and older in the U.S. and a quarter of those were socially isolated. Life transitions and disruptive events, like retirement, the loss of a spouse or friends, or children moving away put older adults at higher risk for social isolation and loneliness. Social isolation and loneliness pose significant public health risks, particularly for older adults, contributing to poor health outcomes, such as declines in mental or cognitive health and the onset or worsening of chronic diseases, like diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Social isolation not only impacts health outcomes and overall quality of life, but also it carries a heavy price tag. Social isolation among older adults accounts for an estimated \$6.7 billion in annual excess Medicare spending.

What will do the Addressing SILO Act do?

The Addressing SILO Act would improve social connection and reduce isolation and loneliness among older adults and adults with disabilities through grants and training programs for Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and community-based organizations. Specifically, the bill provides \$62.5 million in annual funding to support AAAs and community-based organizations in:

- Providing training for their staff to better address and prevent social isolation and loneliness;
- Conducting outreach to individuals at-risk for social isolation and loneliness;
- Developing community-based interventions to mitigate social isolation and loneliness;
- Connecting at-risk individuals with social and clinical supports; and
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the programs developed and implemented through the grants.

Supporting Organizations: Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness, Elder Justice Coalition