

**From:** [ESTHER M OLSON](#)  
**To:** [Krohn, Margaret](#)  
**Cc:** [Batterman, Cheryl](#)  
**Subject:** HHN-O-06  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 28, 2020 7:08:13 PM

---

CAUTION: External Email - Beware of unknown links and attachments. Contact Helpdesk at 266-4440 if unsure

## Personnel and Finance Committee

### 2021 Budget Testimony

10/28/20

Good Evening Everyone – My name is Esther Olson

Advocate & Chair – AAA Leg/Adv Com

Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

I am speaking tonight in support of HHN-O-06, Nutrition Site Management funding for the AAA Nutrition Program.

I realize this is a tough budget year but like the community in general - the aging community's needs continue to grow and to become more complex – and as we all know the elderly population was extremely hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Social Isolation, limited access to food supplies and medical services, mental health worries, anxiety over contacting the virus, etc., have all combined to increase the need for assistance and support from senior programs like the Nutrition Program.

Home delivered meals increased 59% over last year due to the pandemic. The Nutrition

Program provided a total of 213,242 home -delivered meals this year so far – 79,759 more than this time last year. While it has been able to cover the cost of the meals using

\$1.1 M in Families First and CARES Act funding, there is no additional funding for nutrition site management costs. This includes labor and associated costs needed to coordinate and maintain safe and sanitary facilities for packaging and delivering these meals to the elderly.

These same workers are collecting data on the health and well-being of our seniors, providing nutrition information and engaging in isolation reducing activities. These essential workers are vital for keeping our most vulnerable populations fed and relatively safe in their homes. Even without the pandemic, this program has been struggling to keep pace with the rising costs of providing this vital service.

So I urge you to think about how important this program is to our elderly community and approve amendment HHN -O -06.

Thank you again for this opportunity to speak and for your continuing support.

Esther Olson

[emolson2@wisc.edu](mailto:emolson2@wisc.edu)

608-335-3207