October 9, 2014

Ms. Nora Super
Executive Director
White House Conference on Aging
c/o U.S. Administration on Aging
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Ms. Super:

Congratulations on your appointment as the Executive Director of the White House Conference on Aging (WHCoA). We look forward to your leadership to promote the health and well-being of America’s older adults. With a membership of over 130,000, the American Psychological Association (APA) shares your commitment to improving the quality of life experienced by older Americans. APA is the world’s largest association of psychologists, with over two thousand members who work specifically to promote the vitality and quality of life of older adults through their research, clinical, and academic endeavors.

APA has a long and rich history of providing input to past WHCoAs. Beginning in 1971, APA President Dr. Kenneth C. Clark provided the WHCoA Executive Director with the findings of an APA Task Force on Aging report that contained a comprehensive review of the scientific, professional, and practical issues associated with aging. For the 1995 WHCoA, APA cosponsored the White House Mini-Conference on Emerging Issues in Mental Health and Aging. Most recently, in 2005, an APA convention symposium, “Psychology and Public Policy – Contributions to the White House Conference on Aging” was designated as a WHCoA sponsored event. Also, that year, APA hosted a National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging WHCoA Listening Session. APA’s Council of Representatives adopted a Resolution on the 2005 White House Conference on Aging and will be voting in February on a new, updated resolution for the 2015 White House Conference on Aging.

Psychological research provides a solid empirical foundation for understanding and addressing each of the four themes identified for the 2015 WHCoA. With regard to retirement security, psychology contributes to the understanding and development of age-friendly workplaces through the use of technology, ergonomics, and life-long learning. In the realm of long term service and supports, psychologists have developed evidence-based interventions and supportive services to help families manage the stress associated with caregiving. Psychologists have also developed interventions to foster behaviors that keep older adults physically, cognitively and socially active to promote their vitality. Finally, psychological research and practice provide insights into the risks and protective factors for financial exploitation, abuse, and neglect of older adults, as well as interventions to ameliorate the psychological effects of elder abuse.
APA looks forward to sharing the expertise of psychologists with you and others who are organizing the WHCoA. In order to do so, we would welcome the participation of psychologists as advisors, presenters, and delegates to the WHCoA. We would also like for a special session at our APA annual convention (with an average attendance of roughly 10,000) to once again be a 2015 WHCoA-sponsored event. In addition, we would be interested in preparing background papers regarding each of the WHCoA themes that would be developed in conjunction with this event.

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you in person to discuss some of these possibilities, as well as any other opportunities for collaboration you might envision. Please include APA on your contact list of interested organizations with Deborah DiGilio, MPH, our Office on Aging Director, and Roberta Downing, PhD, on our government relations team, as our organizational contact persons. Ms. DiGilio can be reached at (202) 336-6135 or ddigilio@apa.org and Dr. Downing at (202) 336-5931 or rdowning@apa.org. We look forward to meeting with you and working with you towards a productive WHCoA. Thank you for your consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Norman B. Anderson, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer