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I am one of the co-founders of SAGE back in 1978 in NYC and one of the co-founders of SAGE Maine in 2013 and have been involved with our monthly support groups in Bangor, ME for about 6 years. I have met several older Transgender individuals through those support groups and understand why it is important that they be included in national data collection for older Americans. The ones I know are living vulnerable lives, at risk for poverty, food insecurity, and health crises that would make them eligible for and perhaps dependent on a range of services under the Older Americans Act. Fortunately, they live in Maine with legal protections against discrimination; but their vulnerability would be much worse in other parts of the U.S.

Currently they are resilient survivors of a very challenging life history and they need to be recognized and counted as a distinct group of at-risk elders in our country. They should not be invisible to the Older Americans Act.

Please include Transgender Elders as a distinct group in the survey.

Thank you.