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July 12, 2024

**Smt Nirmala Sitharaman**

Hon'ble Finance Minister of India, New Delhi

Respected Ma'am,

**Greetings from Agewell Foundation.**

The ever-growing population of older persons is playing an increasingly crucial role in our society and economy. With the very first budget under Modi 3.0 on the horizon, they are anticipating significant support and initiatives under your direction.

Through ongoing interactions with numerous older persons, their family members, and caregivers, we at Agewell Foundation have compiled the emerging expectations of older persons. On behalf of over 150 million old people (60+) in India, we appeal to you to kindly consider the following measures while delivering the much-awaited budget:

- ✦ **Higher income tax exemption limit for Senior Citizens** - The basic tax exemption threshold should be revised for senior citizens from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh.
- ✦ **Tax-free pensions for older persons** - For all older persons with annual taxable income of up to Rs. 12 Lacs.
- ✦ **More Tax Deductions under Sections 80C and 80TTB** – Senior Citizens expect tax deductions up to Rs. 75000/-
- ✦ **GST Exemption on services and products, commonly used by the elderly** - Audit diapers, Medicines (primarily used by elderly), Healthcare equipment like wheelchairs, walkers, walking sticks, commode chairs, etc. and Lifesaving products, i.e. pacemakers, dialysis, and stents (used by senior citizens)
- ✦ **Tax-Free Investment Options / Financial Security Measures** - Provisions such as a higher rate of interest on savings/investments by senior citizens with financial institutions (Banks/Post Offices/ etc.) and Tax-free investment exclusively for senior citizens
- ✦ **Social Pension Schemes** - The monthly amount of Old Age Pension should be revised according to prevailing inflation. The current share of the Central Government in the monthly old-age pension must be increased up to Rs. 5000/- per month for every old person. The state government should also be advised to increase its share
- ✦ **Prime Minister's Self-Employment Scheme for the Retired People** - The scheme should be initiated to tap the unexplored potential of older persons, who have experience, knowledge, wisdom, resources, time, and above all zeal to work in old age to keep themselves engaged and connected with the mainstream
- ✦ **Creation of an age-friendly environment** - Ensuring that public spaces and services are accessible and accommodating for senior citizens
- ✦ **Setting up of Skill Training & Retooling Centres for the Senior Citizens** -For providing skill training and modern technological know-how to senior citizens to retool and empower them for income generation in old age
- ✦ **Delivery of Nutri Kits to elderly from BPL families on a monthly basis** - Ensure proper and nutritional food items for the elderly with a poor health condition
- ✦ **Dedicated Healthcare services for the elderly** - Door-step healthcare services for all the older persons - preference must be given to elderly patients/ bedridden elderly / older persons, unable to walk/move/living alone or facing acute health disorders
- ✦ **Online counseling** - For all kinds of psychological/medical/financial/legal issues being faced by elderly

We sincerely hope that these measures will be given due consideration in the upcoming Union Budget, reflecting the government's commitment to improving the lives of our senior citizens.

Warm regards,

*Himanshu Rath*

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[www.agewellfoundation.org](http://www.agewellfoundation.org)



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