



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

October 5, 2017

Re: Senate Budget Committee Vote on 2018 Budget Resolution

Dear Senator:

The undersigned Co-Chairs of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Fiscal Policy Task Force urge you to vote against the FY 2018 Senate Budget Resolution and the work requirement amendment introduced by Senator Kennedy. The Senate Budget paves the way to fast-track deep cuts to a wide range of programs that people with disabilities rely on for their health, safety, and wellbeing, while setting up massive tax cuts for the most prosperous.

CCD is the nation's largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for national public policy that ensures the education, self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

Loss of Federal Revenue, Tax Cuts, and Pressure to Cut Federal Programs

Passage of the Senate Budget is a critical first step in moving forward with the [outline of a tax plan](#) released last week. This tax plan would result in the loss of \$2.4 trillion in revenue over 10 years, according to a [preliminary analysis](#) by nonpartisan Tax Policy Center (TPC). Such a drastic loss of federal tax dollars will create pressure to cut many important programs for people with disabilities in the long run, including Medicaid, Medicare, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and numerous non-defense discretionary (NDD) programs. The TPC analysis notes that trillions of unspecified spending cuts would be needed to balance the Senate Budget in 10 years and CCD reasonably fears many disability-related programs will end up being included in these unspecified cuts.

This budget would set up long term cuts to disability-related programs while providing for trillions of dollars in tax cuts that disproportionately benefit the most prosperous Americans and increases the deficit by up to \$1.5 trillion. The same TPC analysis reports that taxpayers in the top 1 percent (incomes above \$730,000) would receive 80% of all the tax cuts after ten years. Such unequal benefits would worsen the already shocking levels of wealth inequality in the country, particularly between people with disabilities and those at the top of the scale.

Most economists do not accept the simple presumption that tax cuts spur sufficient economic growth to make up for the lost revenue to the federal government. There is ample evidence proving otherwise. In fact, this budget violates several other [CCD principles for tax reform](#) signed by 27 national disability organizations.

Affordable Care Act (ACA) Repeal and NDD Budget Caps

The Senate Budget would allow for, among other things, legislation to repeal or replace the ACA (including its Medicaid expansion) and lower the non-defense discretionary (NDD) spending caps. Measured relative to the Congressional Budget Office's June 2017 baseline estimates, the Senate Budget would allow for cuts of \$1.3 trillion, primarily in Medicaid and subsidies to make coverage affordable through the ACA marketplaces. NDD funding, which supports a broad array of disability programs such as housing, education, employments, and transportation would see \$800 billion in cuts, a nearly 30% reduction from 2010 levels, adjusting for inflation. We strongly oppose these cuts.

Work Requirement Amendment

We oppose the Kennedy amendment to implement work requirements for all means-tested federal "welfare" programs. Any policy proposal with the goal of increasing work must ensure that a person's basic needs (such as housing, food, health care, and attendant care) are met in order to be able to work. For example, Medicaid specifically covers services, such as attendant care, that are critical for people with disabilities to be able to get to work and do their jobs. Requiring individuals to work to qualify for this program would set up a completely contradictory policy.

People with disabilities need a bipartisan budget that protects Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security and provides commensurate increases for both defense and nondefense spending. Instead, this budget targets the most vital mandatory programs for people with disabilities and doubles down on harmful cuts to NDD programs. Please reject this budget and work across the political aisle on solutions that will address our nation's priorities without targeting people with disabilities.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact one of the Fiscal Policy Task Force Co-Chairs: Donna Meltzer, 202-506-5813 or dmeltzer@nacdd.org; Kim Musheno, 301-588-8252 or kmusheno@aucd.org; Annie Acosta, 202-783-2229 or acosta@thearc.org; and Lisa Ekman, 202-550-9996 or Lisa.Ekman@nosscr.org.

Sincerely,

Kim Musheno, Association of University Centers on Disabilities

Donna Meltzer, National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities

Annie Acosta, The Arc of the United States

Lisa Ekman, National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives