



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

Social Security Task Force Annual Report for 2018

2018 TOP ACTIVITIES

The Social Security Task Force continued its work on the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) programs on behalf of people with disabilities. Areas of focus during 2018 included the following:

- **Ensuring that proposed changes to the Social Security and SSI disability programs protect the rights and interests of people with disabilities.**

The Task Force advocated vigorously to ensure that proposed regulatory and other administrative policy changes to the Social Security disability determination and appeals process did not undercut the rights or ability of people with disabilities to access the income support benefits to which they are entitled. This included advocacy to oppose restoration of the reconsideration level of appeals in the 10 prototype states; to oppose an Executive Order that politicizes hiring of Administrative Law Judges; to improve implementation of recent regulatory changes the Task Force opposed that created arbitrary deadlines for the submission of evidence without adequate due process protections and monitoring; and to improve the hearing backlog strategy contained in the CARES plan. The Task Force opposed program changes included in the President's Fiscal Year 2018 budget proposal. The Task Force submitted comments on proposed revisions to the Medical Criteria for Evaluating Musculoskeletal Impairments. All CCD letters and comments are available on the CCD website.

- **Monitoring Congressional action on SSDI and SSI and educating members of Congress and their staff on the importance of these programs to people with disabilities.**

Task Force Co-Chairs met with key Congressional staffers in the House and Senate and developed fact sheets, response letters, and other documents to represent our positions. The Task Force was invited to testify at a Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee hearing on SSA's disability appeals process, and submitted comments for the record of a Senate Finance Committee hearing on a proposal to pay for a new parental leave benefit by cutting Social Security. The Task Force supported legislation to make Social Security benefits more adequate, extend solvency and simplify administration of the Social Security Trust Funds. All documents are available on the CCD website.

- **Advocating that SSA has adequate resources for its administrative budget.** Another major issue continued to be SSA's need for adequate funding to reduce the disability claims backlog of more than 840,000 people waiting for hearings and prevent deterioration of other critical services

primarily caused by the underfunding of SSA for many years. Efforts have already started in advocating for the SSA fiscal year (FY) 2020 budget.

- **Working to educate the public about the importance of Social Security benefits for people with disabilities and to ensure the solvency of the Social Security Trust Funds.**

The Task Force developed responses to the 2018 Social Security Trustees' Report. All documents are available on the CCD website.

- **Monitoring proposals on the SSI program.**

The Task Force continued to work with other disability advocates around the country to address criticisms of the program. The Task Force also strongly opposed the proposal in the President's budget request to create sliding scale SSI benefits for multi recipient households. All documents are available on the CCD website.

- **Monitoring proposals to promote employment and advocating to improve disability work incentives.**

The Task Force continued to monitor implementation of the Benefit Offset National Demonstration (BOND), the PROMISE initiative, the Promoting Opportunity Demonstration, and other SSA demonstrations. The Task Force continued to coordinate its efforts with the CCD Employment and Training Task Force, including comments on improving outcomes for youth receiving SSI. The Task Force also supported legislation for SSA to create an online tool that helps SSDI beneficiaries understand how earnings will affect their benefits. All documents are available on the CCD website.

TASK FORCE MEETING TIME AND DAY OF MONTH:

The Task Force met on the third Wednesday of each month from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon.

TASK FORCE WEB PAGE:

http://c-c-d.org/rubriques.php?rub=taskforce.php&id_task=12

TASK FORCE CO-CHAIRS IN 2018:

Lisa Ekman, National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives

Tracey Gronniger, Justice in Aging

Jeanne Morin, National Association of Disability Representatives

Web Phillips, National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare

T.J. Sutcliffe, The Arc of the United States