



September 18, 2024

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Chair
House Energy and Commerce
Committee
2188 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
House Energy and Commerce
Committee
2107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

**RE: Support for H.R. 670, Think Differently Database Act and H.R. 8107,
Ensuring Access to Medicaid Buy-in Programs Act of 2024**

Dear Chair Rodgers and Ranking Member Pallone:

The undersigned co-chairs of the Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities (CCD) Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Task Force write in support of the removal of age limits for the Medicaid Buy-In contained in H.R. 8107, and the Think Differently Database Act (H.R. 670), both of which would support people with disabilities in accessing critical Medicaid services. CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration, and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society, free from racism, ableism, sexism, and xenophobia, as well as LGBTQ+ based discrimination and religious intolerance.

The LTSS Task Force addresses the services and supports that enable individuals with disabilities of all ages to live in their own homes and communities, known as Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). HCBS, which are primarily provided through Medicaid, are necessary for the community integration, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for many people with disabilities and older adults and makes it possible for them to fully exercise their civil and human rights.

The Task Force asks the subcommittee to support the following proposals that would further enable individuals with disabilities and their families to receive Medicaid HCBS.

We are limiting our comments at this time to the proposals that the Task Force has historically supported.

Remove the Age Limitation for the Medicaid Buy-In Program

People with disabilities who wish to work should be able to do so as long as they choose—without having to either sacrifice Medicaid coverage or their jobs. Under current law, in most states, people with disabilities who are under the age of 65 are able to work, earn a small income, and to buy into the Medicaid program by paying a premium. The existing age cap prohibits people with disabilities over the age of 64 who wish to continue working from doing so, lest they lose essential benefits and supports. The Task Force supports removing the upper age limit for people with disabilities who wish to buy into Medicaid and appreciate continued investment in making HCBS available to all who need it.

We ask for your support of the provisions in H.R. 8107 that would remove the age cap for individuals wishing to buy into Medicaid, and which recognizes the dignity of work for all Americans as well as the importance for people with disabilities to be independent and participate in society on their own terms. We are also appreciative of the continued commitment to investing and improving access to HCBS that is reflected in the additional provisions contained in H.R. 8107 regarding 1915(c) waivers.

Think Differently Database Act

The Think Differently Database Act would help address the challenge many individuals with disabilities face in understanding their caregiving options by requiring the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to create an online clearinghouse of state caregiving services and programs. This publicly available website would feature eligibility requirements, available services, waitlist duration, and other critical information about state caregiving services, including Medicaid waiver and buy-in programs. The legislation would require that this information be updated periodically and searchable by geographic area.

We ask for your support for H.R. 670, which represents a meaningful step in helping to address the common caregiving challenge of not knowing what caregiving options exist and their eligibility requirements.

Thank you for your attention to these important issues. The Task Force looks forward to continued partnership as the subcommittee works to move forward legislation that would support people with disabilities and improve access for Medicaid services.

Sincerely,

Lydia Dawson, ANCOR

Jennifer Lav, National Health Law Program

Gelila Selassie, Justice in Aging

Tory Cross, Caring Across Generations

CCD LTSS Task Force Co-Chairs