



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

**Social Security Task Force
Annual Report for 2015
December, 2015**

2015 ACTIVITIES

The Social Security Task Force continued its work on the Social Security and the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) programs on behalf of people with disabilities. Areas of focus during 2015 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 continued to counter attacks on the Social Security disability programs by Congress, media outlets, and other organizations. The Task Force led responses to the Social Security provision in the House Rules for the 114th Congress, as well as successful advocacy to prevent cuts to the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program from being used as pay-fors for unrelated programs, such as surface transportation reauthorization. Task Force Co-Chairs met with key Congressional staffers in the House and Senate and developed a number of fact sheets, response letters, Statements for the Record, and other documents in order to represent our positions. All documents are available on the CCD website. We also worked with other partners and coalitions.

- **Advocating that SSA has adequate resources for its administrative budget.**

Another major issue in 2015 continued to be the Social Security Administration's (SSA's) need for adequate funding to reduce the disability claims backlog 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) 2017 budget.

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

The Task Force continued to advance our Social Security Disability Insurance Demonstrations Principles document and proposal for a benefit offset in the Title II disability program, sharing the proposal extensively with Hill and Administration staff and others. We continued to coordinate efforts with the CCD Employment and Training Task Force.

- **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.**

We developed responses to the 2015 Social Security Trustees' Report. All documents are available on the CCD website. We also supported merging the Social Security Trust Funds or reallocation of payroll taxes in order to maintain the solvency of the Disability Insurance (DI) Trust Fund. Reallocation to secure the DI Trust Fund through 2022 was included in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015.

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

The Task Force continues to work with other disability advocates around the country to address criticisms of the program, usually focusing on the SSI childhood disability program. In addition, we support modernization of antiquated income and resource rules.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

The Task Force expects to continue to work on all of the issues described above. Specifically:

- Monitor proposed changes to the Social Security and SSI disability programs to ensure that the rights of people with disabilities are protected. We will continue to work with Members of Congress, other coalitions, and friendly media outlets, while countering attacks that are detrimental to people with disabilities.
- Continue to work regarding the solvency of the Social Security Trust Funds to ensure that the impact on people with disabilities is considered and their interests are protected.
- Advocate that SSA's administrative budget be adequately funded so that SSA has sufficient resources for personnel and service needs.
- Advocate for legislation, regulations, policy changes, and demonstration pilots to improve, simplify, and update the Social Security and SSI disability programs, including work incentives.
- Continue to work with other CCD Task Forces to monitor proposals to promote employment among disability beneficiaries and potential beneficiaries. In particular, we will seek to influence the development of proposals to ensure that they are directed toward maximizing employment opportunities while also doing no harm to existing critical income supports.
- Monitor the implementation of the disability programs in the Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance program and the SSI program; present testimony as requested to Congress; respond to notices of proposed rulemaking; and raise issues affecting people with disabilities to SSA officials and Congressional staff.

CO-CHAIRS IN 2015:

Kate Lang, 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

Ethel Zelenske, National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives