



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, and Leader McCarthy:

The co-chairs of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Social Security Task Force write to follow up on our July 26, 2021 and May 12, 2021 letters urging the inclusion of long-overdue improvements to the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program in the pandemic recovery legislation now being considered. 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.

We understand that there is currently substantial debate about what will ultimately be in the Build Back Better package, but we believe that it is crucial for SSI improvements to be included. SSI provides critical income assistance to 8 million very low-income people with disabilities and older adults and the benefit amounts and rules of this majority-minority program have not been updated for almost 50 years. We continue to strongly support the inclusion of President Biden's campaign commitments on SSI in Build Back Better, but we understand the cost constraints that Congress is facing.

Some of the President's commitments are very affordable: increasing the income disregards is only \$60 billion over ten years, eliminating the rules prohibiting help from family and friends is only \$31 billion, and updating the resource limits is only \$8 billion. Other smaller changes we have long supported have negligible costs of under \$500 million over ten years (including expanding SSI to the territories, excluding retirement accounts from resources, eliminating dedicated accounts, and other technical changes from the SSI Restoration Act). After decades of

neglect, it is long past time for Congress to pass as many of these changes as possible in the upcoming package.

These important and long-overdue reforms are urgently needed to ensure that the 8 million people who currently rely on SSI benefits--as well as COVID long-haulers who will turn to SSI for critical income support in the months and years ahead--are able to live in dignity. We stand ready to help you make these long-overdue improvements a reality as we all work together to "build back better."

For more information or to arrange a meeting on this important issue, please contact Bethany Lilly ([lilly@TheArc.org](mailto:lilly@TheArc.org)).

Sincerely,

Stacy Cloyd, National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives  
Tracey Gronniger, Justice in Aging  
Bethany Lilly, The Arc of the United States  
Jeanne Morin, National Association of Disability Representatives