



CCD Virtual Briefing on The ADA at 32: Achieving Accessible, Integrated, and Affordable Housing for People with Disabilities

People with disabilities may make up 20-25% of the US population, but disabled people and their diverse unmet housing needs have yet to be at the forefront of federal housing policymaking. Disabled people of all ages, disproportionately nonwhite and poor people with disabilities, are acutely impacted by the nation's housing crisis and face staggering barriers from high costs, continued segregation, institutionalization, lack of supply, extreme rates of inaccessibility, sky rotting rates of discrimination, among others.

COVID-19 exasperated the existing crises: the pandemic has disproportionately hurt people who live, receive services, or work in institutional and congregate settings. People with disabilities, including seniors, who live in nursing homes, group homes, psychiatric hospitals, board and care homes, and other types of congregate facilities to receive the services they need are too often being warehoused in settings that have experienced very elevated rates of COVID-19 infections and deaths. In crowded conditions and in shared rooms, facilities, and with shared staff, social distancing and other COVID precautions are difficult or impossible. The data are incomplete, but what we do know is alarming: residents and staff of nursing facilities alone account for 15% of COVID-19 deaths in the United States.

Unnecessary segregation of people with disabilities violates the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and people with disabilities have a right to receive services in “the most integrated setting appropriate to their need”. But despite the fact that most people with disabilities want to live in the community and decades of data demonstrating that community living is significantly less expensive in the long-term than institutional and congregate settings, people continue to be stuck in congregate settings.

The solution is to provide those residing in institutions and other congregate settings the opportunity to live in non-congregate settings in the community by providing affordable, accessible housing linked to voluntary community-based support and protections against discrimination. Black Indigenous People of Color



(BIPOC) with disabilities also face additional barriers to affordable housing rooted in historical and structural racism.

Increasing access to affordable, accessible housing

- Support \$667 million for Mainstream Vouchers in the FY23 budget. PHAs must be allowed to use 10% of funds (in addition to Admin Fees) for security deposits, landlord incentives, and other activities to ensure people with disabilities can lease up their vouchers.
- Support \$400 million for Section 811 program. All new units should be funded through the Project Rental Assistance component of the program.
- The disability community stands strong with other extremely low-income populations and calls on Congress to fulfill its promise of a universal voucher program for those who need assistance to pay their rent. We also support strengthening housing finance programs, like the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, which includes lowering the private activity bond cap and additional solutions that incentivize housing production that is **affordable** (including to those who are extremely low income), **accessible, integrated, and inclusive**, particularly to disabled people who need supportive services in their own homes.

Provide voluntary access to community-based services

- Invest in Home and Community-Based Services through the health reconciliation bill. HCBS services ensure that people with disabilities are able to get their support needs met without being forced into institutional settings. Historic underfunding of HCBS services has led to long wait lists and a severe HCBS workforce shortage that limit the ability of people with disabilities to live freely in their communities.
- Continue to encourage the use of HCBS opportunities to provide services that support community-based housing, such as housing search, stabilization services, and accessibility modifications.

Ensure protection against discrimination

- Congress must ensure HUD comprehensively addresses the Inspector General's recommendations in the "Requests for Reasonable Accommodation in Public Housing" report



- Congress must ensure HUD's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing regulations and policies must require states and localities to provide integrated, accessible housing opportunities and ensure communities seek the input of people with disabilities and their advocates, including those living in institutional settings.

To get in contact with CCD Housing Task Force Co-Chairs on how you can get involved and support the needed policy interventions, please reach out to:

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