

The Disability and Aging Collaborative &



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

June 15, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515

The **252** undersigned member organizations of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD), Disability and Aging Collaborative (DAC), and other state and national organizations write to urge you to include the vital needs of people with disabilities and aging adults in the next COVID-19 relief package.

While the COVID-19 legislative packages passed by Congress thus far were expansive, they all but ignored the critical needs of the disability and aging communities. Thankfully, the HEROES Act that passed the House on May 15, 2020 did include several provisions imperative to the lives of people with disabilities and aging adults. These provisions must remain in the bill that ultimately passes the Senate.

In particular, the dedicated funding for Medicaid Home and Community-based (HCBS) services is of utmost importance for the disability and aging communities. Those funds are necessary to support the workforce that provides critical services to people with disabilities and aging adults, the service providers that employ that workforce, and the people who rely on those services to live safely in their homes and communities. The home and community-based service system, already overburdened before the pandemic, does not have the resources it needs to safely support people with disabilities and aging adults through this crisis. Without additional resources, aging adults and people with disabilities will be forced to leave their homes and communities and move into congregate settings, a failure to safeguard their civil rights and a grave risk to their health--as demonstrated by severe and persistent outbreaks in nursing facilities, institutions and other congregate settings.

We were pleased to see that the HEROES Act included a broad FMAP increase for Medicaid. Millions of people with disabilities, aging adults and their families rely on the Medicaid system

to support them in their homes and communities and for their other healthcare needs. When faced with budget crises and other stressors, states have often responded by cutting Medicaid benefits, eligibility or payments to providers. During a pandemic it is imperative that funding flows to states to support the stability of the Medicaid program. We urge you to support a broad FMAP increase and urge you to maintain the strong maintenance of effort (MOE) protections that were included in the Families First Act. Any weakening of the MOE would put Medicaid coverage, eligibility and services at risk.

The broad FMAP enhancement, while important, is not targeted to vitally important HCBS programs, which every state relies on to keep people out of, or enable them to transition from, institutions. Because HCBS are optional Medicaid services, they are some of the most at risk for cuts in budget crises, placing people with disabilities and older adults at serious risk of unnecessary institutionalization. The funding dedicated to HCBS is necessary to keep people with disabilities and aging adults safely in their homes and communities. Therefore, we again urge that the package ultimately passed in the Senate MUST INCLUDE the targeted 10 percent FMAP increase for HCBS included in the House package in addition to a broader FMAP increase for all Medicaid services.

We must act now to prevent much of the worst impact of this outbreak, and we are grateful for the prompt action so far taken. We urge the Senate to address the serious, destabilizing deficits facing our Nation's only publicly funded long-term care system by including both the broad enhanced FMAP and the targeted enhanced FMAP for HCBS in its coronavirus response package. For additional information or questions, feel free to contact CCD LTSS and DAC co-chair Nicole Jorwic: jorwic@thearc.org.

Sincerely,

Agencies on Aging of CT
Aging Life Care Association
Aging Services Consultant
Alabama Conference of Executives of The Arc
Alabama Lifespan Respite
Alzheimer's Association
Alzheimer's Impact Movement
Altarum, Program to Improve Eldercare
American Association on Health and Disability
American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
American Civil Liberties Union
American Dance Therapy Association
American Geriatrics Society
American Kidney Fund
American Network of Community Options & Resources (ANCOR)
American Physical Therapy Association
American Therapeutic Recreation Association

Area Agencies on Aging Association of Michigan
Arizona ADAPT
Arizona Association of Area Agencies on Aging
Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE)
Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Autism Family Services of New Jersey
Autism Society Greater Baton Rouge, Inc.
Autism Society Greater Harrisburg Area
Autism Society Greater Philadelphia
Autism Society Louisiana
Autism Society of America
Autism Society of Baltimore-Chesapeake
Autism Society of Boulder County
Autism Society of Greater Akron
Autism Society of Greater New Orleans
Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin
Autism Society of Iowa
Autism Society of Maine
Autism Society of Minnesota
Autism Society of North Louisiana
Autism Society of Northern Virginia
Autism Society of Oregon
Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin
Autism Society Of Southeastern Wisconsin
Autism Society of Texas
Autism Society of the Greater Capital Region
Autism Society River Cities
Autism Society Southwest New Jersey Affiliate 532
Autism Society Ventura County
Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN)
BIAA-KY
Brain Injury Association of America
Brain Injury Association of Delaware
Brain Injury Association of Kansas and Greater Kansas City
Brain Injury Association of Michigan
Brain Injury Association of New York State
Brain Injury Association of Rhode Island
Brain Injury Association-KY Chapter
Brainwave Neurorehab, PLLC
California Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition
Caregivers of New Jersey
Caring Across Generations
Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation
Center for Public Representation
Central MN Council on Aging
Channel Islands Social Services
Chesapeake Down Syndrome Parent Group

Chicagoland Disabled People of Color Coalition
Children's Aid
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
Chronic Disease Coalition
Coachella Valley Autism Society
Coalition on Human Needs
Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition
CommunicationFIRST
Community Catalyst
Community Options, Inc.
Congress of California Seniors
Cure SMA
DC Special Kids
Democratic Disability Caucus of FLORIDA
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
Disability Rights Florida
Disability Voices United
DISABLED QUEERS IN ACTION (NAT)
Down Syndrome Alliance of the Midlands
Down Syndrome Association of Central California
Down Syndrome Association of Connecticut
Down Syndrome Association of Northern Virginia
Down Syndrome Connection of the Bay Area
Down Syndrome Foundation of Florida
Down Syndrome Guild of Greater Kansas City
Down Syndrome Partnership of North Texas
Easterseals
Easterseals Serving Southern Georgia and the Big Bend of Florida
Epilepsy Alliance America
Epilepsy Foundation
Epilepsy Services of New Jersey
Equality North Carolina
Exceptional Family Center
Families USA
Family Caregiver Alliance
Family Caregiver Alliance of Rhode Island
Family Voices
GEORGIA ADAPT
Howard County Autism Society
Human Rights Campaign
Idaho Association of Area Agencies on Aging (I4A)
Indiana Association of Area Agencies on Aging
Kansas ADAPT
Kern Down Syndrome Network
KIIDS (Knowledge & Information about Individuals with Down Syndrome)
Lakeshore Foundation
Lifespan of Greater Rochester
Lifespan Respite WA at PAVE

Little Lobbyists
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.
Lutheran Services in America - Disability Network
Maryland Respite Care Coalition
Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress
MassADAPT
Medicare Rights Center
Mental Health Association in Michigan
Mississippi Family Caregiver Coalition
Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging
Montana ADAPT
Montana Lifespan Respite Coalition
NAACP
Nassau Suffolk Chapter of the Autism Society of America
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys
National ADAPT
National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA)
National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA)
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association for Home Care & Hospice
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Association of RSVP Directors (NARSVPD)
National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS)
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Coalition for the Homeless
National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care
National Council on Aging
National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Health Council
National Health Law Program
National MLTSS Health Plan Association
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization for Rare Disorders
National Organization on Disability
National Organizations for Rare Disorders
National PACE Association
National Respite Coalition
National Senior Corps Association
NC Association of Area Agencies on Aging
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Network of Occupational Therapy Practitioners with Disabilities and Supporters (NOTPD)
Nevada Lifespan Respite Care Coalition
New Jersey Lifespan Respite Coalition
New Mexico Caregivers Coalition
North Central PA ADAPT

North Dakota Protection & Advocacy Project
Northeastern IL AgeGuide
NYS Caregiving and Respite Coalition
Oregon State Council for Retired Citizens
Paralyzed Veterans of America
Paraquad
Partners in Caregiving, LLC
Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies
Personal Attendant Coalition of Texas
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
RetireSafe
Roads to Freedom Center for Independent Living
San Antonio ADAPT
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
Social Security Works
Sooner SUCCESS
South Carolina ADAPT
South Carolina Association of Area Agencies on Aging
TASH
Tennessee Respite Coalition
Texas ADAPT
The Arc of Anchorage (Alaska state chapter)
The Arc Georgia
The Arc Maryland
The Arc Michigan
The Arc New York
The Arc of Arizona
The Arc of California
The Arc of Central Alabama
The Arc of Colorado
The Arc of Connecticut, Inc.
The Arc of Delaware
The Arc of Greater Pittsburgh/Achieva
The Arc of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County
The Arc of Florida, Inc.
The Arc of Illinois
The Arc of Indiana
The Arc of Iowa
The Arc of Massachusetts
The Arc of Nebraska
The Arc of New Jersey
The Arc of New Mexico
The Arc of North Carolina
The Arc of Ohio
The Arc of Oregon
The Arc of Pennsylvania
The Arc of Rhode Island
The Arc of South Carolina

The Arc of Texas
The Arc of the Mid Ohio Valley
The Arc of Virginia
The Arc of Washington State
The Arc of West Virginia
The Arc Tennessee
The Arc of the United States
The Arc Wisconsin
The Coelho Center for Disability Law, Policy and Innovation
The Family Resource Network
The Gerontological Society of America
The Illinois Respite Coalition
The Kelsey
The Starkloff Disability Institute
TARC
Topeka Independent Living Resource Center
Touch the Future Inc
Union for Reform Judaism
United Seniors of Oregon
United States International Council on Disabilities
United States International Council on Disabilities
Verde Valley Seniors in Action Coalition aka Northern Arizona Seniors in Action Coalition
Virginia Association of Area agencies on Aging
Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging
Williams Syndrome Association
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease
World institute on Disability