

## Disability Policy

*Issues for Campaign 2020 and Beyond*

**Civil and Human Rights:** Every person, regardless of ability, should be able to participate fully in their community and not experience discrimination on the basis of their disability.

1. Protect and promote stronger enforcement of the ADA, including its mandate for integration and self-determination in the community.
2. Promote strong enforcement of all laws that protect the rights of people with disabilities.

*Related policies:* [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#), Ruling of [Olmstead v. L.C. \(1999\)](#), & [Disability Integration Act](#) (introduced 2019)

**Employment:** For most people, work provides a pathway to engage in our society's economic and social institutions; however, employment of people with disabilities continues to lag significantly behind those without disabilities.

1. Address barriers to employment by creating incentives for states and territories to expand opportunities for competitive integrated employment, including the need for individualized options for individuals and access to higher education and to career and technical education.
2. Build capacity of the service system to provide competitive integrated employment and allow for a multi-year, well-planned phase out of subminimum wages.

*Related policies:* [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#) (WIOA) of 2014, [Transformation to Competitive Employment Act](#) (introduced 2019), [Capability Act](#) (introduced 2019), & [Raise the Wage Act](#) (introduced 2019)

**Community Living:** Long-term services and supports enable almost 60 million people with disabilities and seniors to live in their homes among their neighbors. However, over one million people with other disabilities continue to go unsupported because of waiting lists, limiting their opportunities to live fully in their communities.

1. Oppose Medicaid block grants and per capita caps.
2. Support the HCBS programs, reverse the Medicaid bias toward institutional settings, and make community living the first and preferred option for people with disabilities.
3. Support the workforce of direct support professionals (DSP) who enable individuals with disabilities to be more independent, able to work and to be contributing members of society.

*Related policies:* [Medicaid Home and Community Based Services Final Rule](#) & [Lifespan Respite Care Act](#)

**Healthcare:** People with disabilities experience health disparities in access to care and in their health outcomes.

1. Preserve, protect and strengthen current health insurance programs. Any health care reforms must ensure comprehensive, affordable and accessible health insurance with protections against discrimination. States should continue to have the option to expand Medicaid.
2. Any health care reform or transition to universal coverage must meet the needs of people with disabilities, including coverage for Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS), full mental health parity and comprehensive coverage levels across the life course as modeled on Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT).
3. Ensure people with disabilities are guiding research that impacts them.

*Related policies:* [Medicare](#), [Medicaid](#), [Affordable Care Act](#) & [Patient-Centered Outcomes Research](#)

**Social Security:** The non-retirement components of Social Security were created almost fifty years ago to address the needs of people with disabilities and their families. These programs were developed at a time when it was thought that individuals with disabilities could not work nor live independently.

1. Modernize the SSI and SSDI programs in a manner that promotes and does not punish labor force participation and savings, and reject proposals that lead to the loss of benefits, supports and services for persons with disabilities.
2. Address aspects of the SSI and SSDI programs that inhibit financial stability and access to the middle class for people with disabilities.
3. Eliminate marriage penalties in SSI by maintaining the individual asset limit regardless of marital status.
4. Protect the current structure of the children's SSI program.

*Related policies:* [Social Security Disability Insurance](#), [Supplemental Security Income](#), & [ABLE Age Adjustment Act](#) (introduced 2019)

**Education:** Educational attainment is directly linked to better employment outcomes, higher wages, and lower unemployment. We must ensure that the government fully includes students with disabilities in all aspects of education, including in assessment and state accountability systems.

1. Provide funding, enforcement, monitoring, guidance and technical assistance to states to implement the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) with additional attention to ensuring students with disabilities are fully included in all aspects of school.
2. Fully fund IDEA and expand support for Part C of IDEA.
3. Continue the activities of the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights to ensure the civil rights of all children with disabilities are protected.
4. Closely monitor the use of discipline, including restraints, with all students, including those with disabilities. End the use of seclusion.
5. Reauthorize and fully fund transition programs in higher education that include students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

*Related policies:* [Individuals with Disabilities Act](#), [Higher Education Act](#), [Every Student Succeeds Act](#), & [Keeping All Students Safe Act](#)

**Housing:** The lack of affordable and accessible housing leaves people with disabilities vulnerable to homelessness, institutionalization and incarceration. Currently, the need for affordable, accessible and integrated housing for people with disabilities is far beyond the supply.

1. Support affordable and accessible housing for people with disabilities – in inclusive settings, not segregated buildings.
2. Support enforcement of the Fair Housing Amendments Acts to combat discrimination against people with disabilities.
3. Support enforcement by HUD of the integration mandate and *Olmstead* decision.

*Related policies:* Ruling of [Olmstead v. L.C. \(1999\)](#), [Disability Integration Act](#) (introduced 2019), [Fair Housing Improvement Act](#) (introduced 2019)

**Transportation:** Accessible transportation is vital to the inclusion of people with disabilities in work, school and community life. People with disabilities have the right to access mass transportation facilities and services. Rural communities especially need resources to improve accessible transportation opportunities.

1. Support continued development and enforcement of accessible transportation.
2. Support universal design for autonomous vehicles, trains and on-demand vehicles (Uber, Lyft, etc.)

*Related policies:* [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#), [Disability Integration Act](#) (introduced 2019), [FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018](#), [Air Carrier Access Amendments Act](#) (introduced 2019)