

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 2, 2019

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director, Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20503

Director Mulvaney:

We write to address a pernicious theme in the Trump Administration's Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) Budget: across multiple agencies and offices, the budget targets people with disabilities. Whether in housing, education, employment, aging, health care, civil rights, transportation, research or any of the other governmental functions that assist people with disabilities and their families, this budget strips the resources that make access and opportunity possible. Any budget proposal by any administration should reflect the goals of the Americans with Disabilities Act: equal opportunity, independent living, full participation, and economic self-sufficiency. Your budget not only doesn't reflect those goals, it actively inhibits their achievement.

In the Trump Administration's FY20 budget you have cut funding to:

- the Traumatic Brain Injury program
- the Paralysis Resource Center
- the state Council on Developmental Disabilities
- the University Centers on Developmental Disabilities
- the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research
- the Independent Living Centers
- the Limb Loss Resource Center
- Gallaudet University
- the Voting Access for People with Disabilities program
- the state Assistive Technology programs
- the Family Caregiver Support Services program
- the Native American Caregiver Support Services program
- the Alzheimer's Disease program
- the Lifespan Respite Care program
- the Autism Surveillance program
- the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee
- the Office of Disability Employment Policy
- Section 811 Housing for Persons with Disabilities

Unfortunately, there are even more examples of cuts to programs that support people with disabilities to work, live in their own homes, get to their jobs, and have access to the opportunities that all Americans enjoy.

We are concerned about all of these cuts to disability programs, but none more so than the proposed cut to Social Security Disability Insurance and Medicaid.

You have proposed \$84 billion in cuts, chiefly, to Social Security Disability Insurance. These are funds that support hard working Americans who have developed disabilities over the course of their lives. The workers who would be denied benefits under your cuts are people who have not only contributed to our economy over decades but have also paid into the Social Security Disability Insurance fund. Our government promised American workers that if they work, grow our economy and they develop a disability – we will take the funds they have contributed in their taxes to provide some care, relief, and dignity.

The proposed cuts to Medicaid are an abomination and insult to American values. The 1965 Social Security Amendments Act created Medicaid and in so doing established a contract with Americans that if they met the eligibility requirements for Medicaid their government would provide the health care and supports they need. The proposed cuts to Medicaid, \$1.5 trillion over ten years, would break that contract with Americans and leave hundreds of thousands of children, older adults, and people with disabilities without the health care and long-term services and supports they need to be part of our society. In addition to the proposed cuts, the Budget proposes to impose mandatory work requirements as a condition of coverage in Medicaid – a policy that would create unnecessary burdens on individuals with disability and threaten their coverage.

The systematic targeting of people with disabilities, their families, and those who serve them will weaken our nation and hurt our economy. The proposal to cut funding for the Special Olympics, a featured cut in each of this administration's three budgets thus far, garnered widespread bipartisan backlash causing President Trump to abandon the proposed cut. However, it is evident that this cut is the tip of the iceberg and indicative of a larger-scale assault on the supports for people with disabilities in this country. We urge you to direct each of our Secretaries and Administrators to review their budgets for cuts to disability programs and act to restore the recommendations for funding.

Sincerely,



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
U.S. Senator



Sherrod Brown
U.S. Senator