



November 16, 2017

Dear Senator:

The Co-Chairs of the Fiscal Policy Task Force of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) strongly oppose the Description of the Chairman's Modification to the Chairman's Mark of the "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act." The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities is the nation's largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for national public policy that ensures the education, self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

This measure would gut Federal revenue requiring huge cuts in Medicaid, Medicare and other programs people with disabilities rely on to live independently in the community to give huge tax cuts to millionaires and corporations. Although neither the mark description nor the budget resolution requires these cuts, deep cuts to these programs will result either now to meet reconciliation deficit targets contained in the concurrent budget resolution or in the future due to increased pressure to rein in the debt and deficit created by the inadequate level of revenue these tax cuts would create.

CCD recently released [principles](#) to guide the consideration of any significant changes to the tax code. Unfortunately, the Senate tax plan violates virtually all of CCD's principles, including:

Unacceptable Process: Failing to provide for a transparent bipartisan process, moving forward to consideration without bill text and a score from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, failing to hold hearings on the specific proposals contained in the bill, and moving the bill under reconciliation rather than through regular order belies the dignity of the Senate. Given the significant complexity of issue and the numbers of people affected, this opaque and rushed process undermines the democratic process.

Impact on People with Disabilities: The inclusion of the repeal of individual mandate will result in nearly 14 million people losing health coverage and will increase premiums for people buying insurance on the health insurance exchange by 10% per year. The individual mandate is a critical piece of the complex system of incentives and penalties created by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) which greatly benefits people with disabilities by eliminating pre-existing condition exclusions, banning annual and lifetime limits, prohibiting discrimination based on health status, and much more. We strongly oppose the Senate bill's attack on this central element of the ACA, taking us back to the failed "skinny repeal" that sought to take away health care and offer nothing in return. Supporting the individual market reform package introduced by Senators Lamar Alexander and Patty Murray proposal does not come close to being a substitute for loss of the individual mandate. As Senator Murray observed, attempting

to repair the damage from repealing the individual mandate by passing the Alexander-Murray bill “is like trying to put out a fire with penicillin.”

Making It Impossible to Properly Fund Programs for People with Disabilities: The tax proposal fails to consider the impact of the tax cuts on the independence and economic security of people with disabilities. Even if the reconciliation bill does not include direct cuts to these programs, it will gut Federal revenue creating enormous pressure to cut Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security and all of the discretionary programs providing support to people with disabilities in the future or now to stay within the \$1.5 trillion limit on the increase in the deficit allowed by the reconciliation instructions contained in the FY 2018 budget resolution.

Exacerbating Income and Wealth Inequality: The tax cuts are heavily skewed toward corporations and millionaires and will increase the unprecedented level of income and wealth inequality in America. Today’s analysis from the nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation challenges claims that this bill is for the middle class. Instead the Senate proposal would give large tax cuts to millionaires while raising taxes on American families earning \$10,000 to \$75,000 over the next decade.

It is clear that the Senate tax plan would take away health coverage for millions of Americans in order to help pay for tax cuts that disproportionately benefits wealthy individuals and corporations while limiting ability of the government to fund the services and supports people with disabilities rely on to live independently in the community. We urge you to reject this plan and work on bipartisan solutions that will address our nation’s priorities without harming people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Annie Acosta, The Arc

Lisa Ekman, The National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives

Donna Meltzer, The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities

Kim Musheno, Autism Society