



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

Statement of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities  
on the Better Care Reconciliation Act

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The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) is strongly opposed to the Senate’s Better Care Reconciliation Act. It is simply unconscionable to restructure and decimate Medicaid, which provides healthcare services and supports that maintain the health, function, independence, and well-being of 10 million enrollees with disabilities and their families. CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration, and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

The Senate’s bill applies per capita caps to Medicaid. This bill deepens the more than \$834 billion of Medicaid cuts proposed by the House and financially punishes the states that have invested the most in providing services to seniors, people with disabilities, and children. For many people with disabilities, being able to access timely needed care is a life or death matter—this is a crude, unwieldy and unfair attempt to ease the negative impact of per capita caps on low-spending states simply by shifting the harm onto states that have prioritized their Medicaid programs. The penalties for states that spend more money on care do not account for key demographic and economic factors that shape differences in state spending.

Ultimately, these per capita caps are designed simply and only to cut costs, and the bill uses those cuts to pay for tax cuts and repeal of provider taxes. Betraying the Medicaid guarantee for people with disabilities and seniors while slashing federal support will force states to cut services and eligibility that put the lives, health, and independence of people with disabilities at significant risk. These cuts will impact all individuals on Medicaid, regardless of carve outs or exceptions made for subpopulations. The inevitable repeal of the Medicaid Expansion, which covers additional millions with disabilities, including people with mental illnesses and substance use disorder, will only compound the massive funding shortages that states face.

In addition, any efforts to “encourage” states to utilize home and community based services waivers will be rendered futile as states face recurrent budgetary deficits (and must continue to provide mandatory institutional services.) The repeal of the enhanced federal funding match for the Community First Choice state plan option, which eight states have implemented to expand access to necessary in-home services for people with disabilities, suggests that the bill’s true priorities lie elsewhere. Encouragement means little without funding.

The Better Care Reconciliation Act also jeopardizes the health insurance coverage of people with disabilities who rely on the private market. It would increase out-of-pocket costs for premiums and cost sharing and raise the deductibles for millions of people by reducing the tax credits and subsidies that are currently available to help low-income people pay for healthcare coverage. It places an “aging tax” on older adults by both reducing available tax credits and allowing health insurance companies to charge them more. And it allows states to waive the essential health benefit requirements that help ensure coverage of the services that people with disabilities need, such as habilitation, rehabilitation services and devices, and behavioral health services.

The Affordable Care Act has helped people, including millions of people with disabilities, gain access to affordable and comprehensive health insurance. While improvements to the health insurance system and Medicaid are needed, the Better Care Reconciliation Act undoubtedly takes us backwards, not forwards. The Senate’s bill goes even further than the House bill to dismantle the current structure and funding of the Medicaid program. While we await an official score from the Congressional Budget Office, we already know that the Senate bill will strip health coverage away from millions of people and make insurance more expensive and less useful for millions more.

In addition to the disastrous impact the Better Care Reconciliation Act will have on health insurance and long-term services and supports coverage for people with disabilities, CCD is gravely disappointed that this bill was developed behind closed doors. The Senate traditionally prides itself on a thoughtful deliberation process, including public hearings, open comment periods on discussion drafts, multi-stakeholder meetings and more. In a vast departure from that, the Senate is expected to vote on this bill within one week of its release and we anticipate significant new amendments in the interim.

CCD urges all Senators to vote NO on the Better Care Reconciliation Act and instead, work through the full Senate committee process and in a bipartisan manner to ensure that all adults and children with disabilities have access to the healthcare they need.