



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES

## **ECONOMIC RECOVERY: IMPLICATIONS FOR DISABILITY PREVENTION**

A joint forum was held by the “American Prospect” and “Institute for America’s Future” and other organizations entitled “America’s Economic Future”. Presenters at the forum were a Governor of a State, a federal legislator, a representative of a financial institution, researchers on domestic policy and economists

### **Summary**

A comparison was made between the economic downturn of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the “New Deal” depression of the 1930’s. Economist study economic data associated with the depression of the 1930s. However, a presentation was made that focused on positive human benefits that came out of the era of the 1930s. A case was made that the Social Security system lifted millions of American out of poverty. Social Security also protected vulnerable Americans through disability insurance and vulnerable families through survivor benefits and was the forerunner to linking security of Americans to health protection through Medicare.

### **Disability Prevention Issue**

Anti-poverty measures emanated from the depression of the 1930s which protect vulnerable populations from diminished health that could contribute to disability. There have been policy initiatives that are undermining the U.S. safety net. For instance, the age of for Social Security benefits have been raised, and beneficiaries have had inflationary health care costs deducted from their social security checks, retirement savings have been diminished, health care and nutritional entitlement programs have eligible participation rates between 60% and 70%, and rolls in the TANF program have plummeted from over 11 million in the early 1990’s to just over 2 million today.

### **Intervention**

A letter was written to a presenter, at the forum concerning protection of vulnerable populations during economic downturns from the perspective of preventing diminished health and disability.

### **Recommendation**

There should be protection of the health and well-being of vulnerable populations during economic downturns that prevent diminished health and disability of vulnerable populations.