

Federal Policy and Advocacy

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The Arc of the US





Current legislative and administrative issues

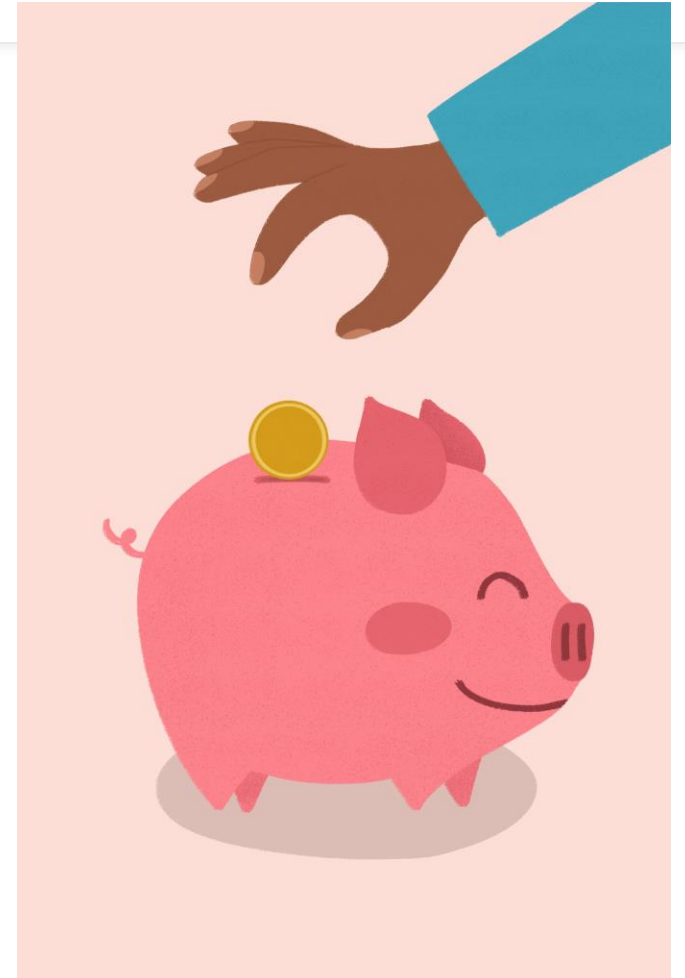
Political landscape



- **Republicans hold majority** in Presidency, House, and Senate but very narrow and partisan
- **Agenda** includes tax cuts, deporting immigrants, and **dramatically** reducing the overall size of the federal government
- It's an **election** year

Current Funding Picture

- President's Budget makes cuts and structural changes to disability programs
- Concerned about DD programs
- Congress is making decisions now



Medicaid and SNAP



Medicaid in Illinois

- Joint Federal and State program that provides health insurance and LTSS. Fed. Gov't pays 65% of IL Medicaid.
- 1 in 4 Illinois residents rely on Medicaid
- Illinois already limits HCBS due to constraints on available funding
- About 16,000 Illinoisians are currently on a waitlist to receive Medicaid-funded HCBS

The Big Budget Law (OBBBA)

- Budget reconciliation bill signed into law on July 4
- Law makes historic cuts to food assistance (SNAP) and Medicaid
- Congress now considering another reconciliation law

Historic Cuts to Food Assistance

- The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** helps more than 42 million Americans put food on the table.
- Largest cut to federal SNAP funding in U.S. history.
 - CBO: 20% cut to SNAP, \$186 billion through 2034



Health Provisions

- Historic cut of almost **\$1 trillion** over 10 years
- **10 million** could lose coverage
 - **270,000 could lose Medicaid coverage due to the new work requirements**
- Huge cost-shift to states
 - IL could receive \$46 billion less federal Medicaid funding – a 19% cut
- Threat to rural hospitals
- How achieve these "savings"?

Budget Law Targets Medicaid Expansion ("Able-bodied")



Adds work requirements



Requires eligibility checks at least every 6 months



Adds up to \$35 dollar copays for certain enrollees



Reduces flexibility to raise money to meet state match



Eliminates incentive for 10 states to expand: AL, FL, GA, KS, MS, SC, TN, TX, WI, WY

People with IDD Will Be Impacted

- Cuts to Medicaid in one area affect all others—cascading effect
- People with IDD are found in all parts of the Medicaid program
- Overall cut in federal funding and more uninsured will challenge hospitals and other medical providers
- While the bill does not directly target HCBS spending --history shows that a loss of Medicaid funding hurts HCBS – see [study](#)





Implementation Timeline

- Nothing changes today
- Most changes coming after Jan. 2027
- But IL is already preparing for changes resulting from OBBBA

What should you do to prepare?

- Help individuals understand their path to Medicaid and SNAP
- Understand the new work requirements in Medicaid and SNAP
- Pay attention to announcements from CMS and state Medicaid offices
- Advocate with your state legislature and governor to protect disability funding
- Participate in state coalitions
- Monitor and share impact stories

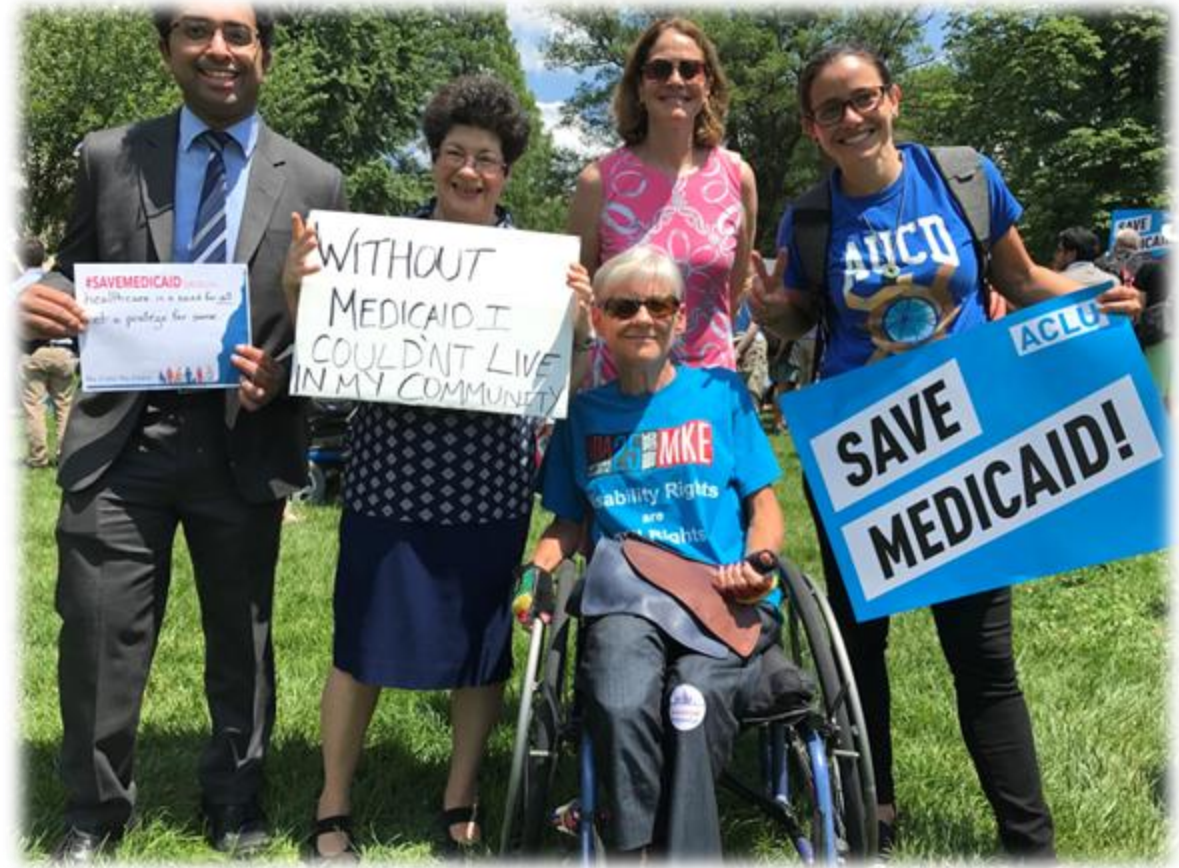
New threats to Medicaid

- Every state now targeted to "prove" there is no "fraud" in Medicaid programs, especially HCBS, Autism Services, transportation, and durable medical equipment.
- HCBS is growing due to increased costs, demand and preference, not "fraud."
- Fraud should be prevented. But, program integrity efforts should **not be used to withhold Medicaid funds to people.**
- This will lead to deep harm to children and adults who depend on Medicaid.



What can we do?

- We must stick together. Division weakens us.
- Educate Members of Congress about how HCBS impacts lives.
- Invite MOCs to HCBS and autism/DD programs.
- Peaceful protests work!





Education

Education



- Main issues we are watching
 - Move of IDEA out of ED to another agency
 - Rules for new federal voucher program
 - Congressional actions which could lead to IDEA changes
 - Keeping All Students Safe Act (KASSA)

Move of IDEA Out of ED

- November, 6 Interagency Agreements were signed moving offices out of the Department of Education
- OSERS (Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services) was not moved
 - OSERS contains 2 offices: Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and RSA (Rehabilitation Services Administration)
- Secretary McMahan has stated no offices or programs will remain at ED
 - Unclear if OSEP will be moved to HHS or DoL

Rules for New Federal Voucher Program

- New federal voucher program passed in Budget Reconciliation bill
- Administered by Dept of Treasury – Anticipating a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) later this summer
- States need to opt-in
- States Opted-In: AK, AL, AR, CO, FL, GA, IA, ID, IN, KS, KY, LA, MO, MS, MT, ND, NE, NV, NH, NY, OH, OK, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, WV, WY (VA opted in before Gov. Spanberger, NY intends to, not official)
- States Opted-Out: MN, NM, OR (AZ, NC, WI governor vetoed)

Congressional Actions on IDEA

- Senator Cassidy, Chair of HELP committee leads the 21st Century Dyslexia Act
 - It amends (changes) IDEA
 - If this bill is marked up, many people can add amendments to change key pieces of IDEA
 - There is potential for a chaotic, unplanned mini-reauthorization of IDEA through this bill
 - He is up for re-election this year and is trying to get this bill passed

Keeping All Students Safe Act (KASSA)

- Bill would ban the use of seclusion and "deadly restraints", greatly limit physical restraint
- Has been reintroduced in the House and Senate
 - In the House has a Republican co-lead which has not happened in many years (Rep. Abe Hamadeh of Arizona)

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Ways to Get Involved in Advocacy

Why is policy advocacy important?

- Legislators want to hear from their constituents
- You offer valuable information to help policymakers make good decisions



IL Members of Congress

- Sen. Dick Durbin
- Sen. Tammy Duckworth

1st	Jackson, Jonathan	D
2nd	Kelly, Robin	D
3rd	Ramirez, Delia	D
4th	Garcia, Jesus	D
5th	Quigley, Mike	D
6th	Casten, Sean	D
7th	Davis, Danny	D
8th	Krishnamoorthi, Raja	D
9th	Schakowsky, Janice	D
10th	Schneider, Bradley	D
11th	Foster, Bill	D
12th	Bost, Mike	R
13th	Budzinski, Nikki	D
14th	Underwood, Lauren	D
15th	Miller, Mary	R
16th	LaHood, Darin	R
17th	Sorensen, Eric	

What do we want?

- Full funding for IDEA (S. 1277/HR 2598)
- Reverse the cuts in Medicaid (S. 2556/HR 4849)
- Medicaid ACCESS Act to make HCBS Mandatory
- Reverse the cuts to SNAP (S. 6088)

Resources From The Arc

Toolkits

thearc.org/advocacytoolkits

- 2026 Medicaid (including settings rule brief, protecting Medicaid while addressing fraud, new work requirements in plain language, and budget law explainer)
- Education
- Lawmaker outreach
- Storyteller
- More coming!



Action Alert From The Arc

TheArc.org/action



Visit The Arc's Election Center

Check your registration & make sure you are ready to vote this November!



Tell Congress: Protect Medicaid HCBS!

Access to Medicaid home and community-based services (HCBS) is already strained. Tell Congress: no more cuts.

Act Now



Share Why Public Education Matters To You

Share why public education is essential for students with disabilities.

Share Story



Tell Congress: No One Should Go Hungry

Remove barriers and reverse SNAP cuts that take food away from those that need it most.

Act Now

Make Your Voter & Candidate Education Plans



**YOUR
VOTE HAS
POWER**



- Chapter Vote Toolkit
(thearc.org/advocacytoolkits)
- The Arc's Voter Resources
(thearc.org/vote)
- Monthly Chapter Meetings
(alexander@thearc.org)

Get Connected with us!

- Sign up for Fusion & Grassroots Advocacy Updates
- Attend Events & Training
- Follow, share, uplift, subscribe, and tag us on social media



Hold the
Date!

March 15–16, 2027

Washington, DC

www.disabilitypolicyseminar.org



UNLESS someone like you
cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better.
It's not.

—*The Lorax*

