**SNA 2023 Advocacy Highlights**

**October 2023**

**SNA Public Policy work is available on the SNA website. There is a section called “Advocacy: Get Involved!” Included there are** [**links and tools**](https://members.specialneedsalliance.org/public-policy/advocacy-get-involved/) **for members to use in their own advocacy.**

SNA signed a [Letter in support](https://thearc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/SSI-SPEA_Letter-of-support_2023_Final.pdf) for S. 2767/H.R. 5408  SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act introduced by Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and U.S. Representatives Brian Higgins (D-NY-26) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-1), the first bipartisan, bicameral push to reform the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, which has not been updated in nearly 40 years and currently punishes older and disabled Americans for saving for emergencies (9/12/23).

SNA signed onto a [comment letter](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tf5rXGCa2zR_WSbHzF2Zbn7TDyDIrRW7/edit) submitted to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) by the Disability and Aging Collaborative on the [Medicaid Access proposed rule](https://us-east-2.protection.sophos.com/?d=federalregister.gov&u=aHR0cDovL3d3dy5mZWRlcmFscmVnaXN0ZXIuZ292L2QvMjAyMy0wODk1OQ==&i=NjAwNDUwMjQ1MDRjNTA0NTdjYjRjNjdm&t=WCtZRkFzU0JoVFBFa0NVQi8wN3l3U1U5YUYxR3lMZ3pvNE96SjU1SVcyUT0=&h=bdb97174b41940d39299766f917d8cb7&s=AVNPUEhUT0NFTkNSWVBUSVb7EllAtmpnZpqU-PQtNu8xnkimkR9Ghct4cMPWqMiPAg)  to increase access to high-quality Medicaid home and community-based services and strengthening the direct care workforce for older adults and people with disabilities (6/30/23).

SNA stepped up its advocacy efforts in support of family caregivers. SNA’s actions include:

* Signed on as an endorsing organization of the*Alleviating Barriers for Caregivers Act (ABC Act)*whichwill be introduced by Senators Ed Markey (D-MA) and Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) by the end of October 2023. The bill aims to reduce administrative challenges in federal agencies and programs for beneficiaries and family caregivers.
* Sent comments to the Administration for Community Living (ACL) on the RAISE National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers
* Signed a letter to President Biden commending his April 18, 2023 Executive Order addressing multiple caregiver issues
* Posted a blog on understanding and navigating the caregiver shortage
* Added a [caregiver advocacy and resources section](https://www.specialneedsalliance.org/public-policy/caregiver-advocacy-and-resources/) to the SNA website.

SNA partnered with the Alliance of Pooled Trusts in submitting an April 17, 2023 [letter](https://members.specialneedsalliance.org/public-policy/) supporting the SSA's proposal to omit food from in-kind and support maintenance (ISM) calculations.

The CCD submitted this [statement](https://www.c-c-d.org/fichiers/CCD-Statement-on-HHS-504-NPRM-091423.pdf) in support of HHS’s publication of its historic proposed rule, *Discrimination on the Basis of Disability in Health and Human Service Programs or Activities*. The long-awaited proposed rule updates, clarifies, and strengthens the implementing regulation for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to address continued discrimination in medical treatment, value assessment methods, child welfare programs and activities, web and mobile accessibility, accessible medical equipment, and integration (9/14/23).

SNA signed onto this [CCD letter](https://c-c-d.org/fichiers/CCD-Fiscal-Policy-TaskForce-letter-on-Budget-Allocations-July-602023.pdf) to the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee (7/6/23) opposing the devastating cuts to the subcommittee allocations that were approved on June 15, 2023.

The CCD letter to congressional leaders (Leader Charles Schumer, Speaker Kevin McCarthy, Chair of Senate Appropriations Patty Murray and Vice-Chair of Senate Appropriations Susan Collins, Chair of House Appropriations Kay Granger and Ranking Member of House Appropriations Rosa DeLauro) urging them to consider the needs of people with disabilities in policy and appropriations deliberations for the 118th Congress (2/22/23). [CCD Priorities Letter to Leaders](https://www.c-c-d.org/fichiers/CCD-118th-Congress-Priorities-Final.pdf)

The CCD Board of Directors statement mourning the passing of Judy Heumann, a lifelong leader, and fierce local, national, and international disability rights advocate. Heumann passed away in Washington, D.C. on March 4th (3/6/23). [Judy Heumann Statement](https://www.c-c-d.org/fichiers/CCD-Board-Statement-on-Passing-of-Judy-Heumann-030623-FINAL.pdf)

The CCD Rights Task Force submitted a statement for the record for the Senate Special Committee on Aging hearing on Guardianships, Conservatorships, Protective Arrangements, and Alternatives (3/ 23/23). [Written Testimony on Guardianship](https://www.c-c-d.org/fichiers/CCD-Rights-Statement-on-Guardianship-and-Alternatives-(submitted-03.23.2023).pdf)

The CCD’s Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Task Force provided a statement for the written record for the Senate Special Committee on Aging in support of the committee’s efforts to highlight the importance of the Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) program (3/9/23). [Written Testimony on Medicaid HCBS](https://www.c-c-d.org/fichiers/CCD-Senate-Aging-Committee-Testimony-3.9.2023.pdf)

The CCD’s Health and LTSS Task Forces provided these comments on the Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) proposed rule on prior authorization and interoperability in Medicaid, the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and Qualified Health Plans (QHPs) sold through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplaces (hereinafter “Prior Authorization Proposed Rule”) (3/13/23). [Download [ PDF]](https://www.c-c-d.org/fichiers/CCD_Prior_AuthorizationComments03132023.pdf)

The CCD’s Health and LTSS Task Forces wrote a letter to CMS regarding the unwinding of the Medicaid continuous coverage requirement. CMS guidance has laid out a series of plans, documents and data that states are required to produce. Among these is a Renewal Redistribution Plan where a state must detail how renewals and other eligibility actions will be distributed across the 12-month unwinding period. The plan must mitigate churn, account for workforce and systems capacity limitations, and establish a sustainable renewal schedule for future years (3/9/23).  [Download [ PDF]](https://www.c-c-d.org/fichiers/CCD-letter-to-CMS-on-unwinding-plans-transparency-final.pdf)