



April 21, 2025

The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair  
 Committee on Appropriations  
 Room S-128, The Capitol  
 Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chairman  
 House Committee on Appropriations  
 H-307, The Capitol  
 Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray, Vice Chair  
 Committee on Appropriations  
 Room S-128, The Capitol  
 Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro,  
 Ranking Member  
 House Committee on Appropriations  
 H-307, The Capitol  
 Washington, DC 20515

Re: FY2026 Appropriations for Critical Programs for People with Disabilities and Families

Dear Sens. Collins and Murray and Reps. Cole and DeLauro:

On behalf of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Developmental Disabilities, Autism and Family Supports Task Force (Task Force) and undersigned organizations, we write to urge adequate Fiscal Year 2026 funding for programs authorized by the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act), Assistive Technology Act, Autism CARES Act, the Lifespan Respite Care Act, and Kevin and Avonte’s Law, the National Family Caregiver Support Program and Parent Information Centers, and the Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSID) Model Demonstrations, National Coordination Center and National Technical Assistance and Dissemination Center.

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (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 Task Force advocates for federal public policies that directly relate to individuals with developmental disabilities (I/DD), including autism spectrum disorders, family supports, and the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

CCD Taskforce on Developmental Disabilities, Autism and Family Supports Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations Recommendations		
Program	Subcommittee	FY2026 Recommendation
State Councils on Developmental Disabilities (DD Councils)	Labor, Health and Human Services, Education	\$85 million
Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with	Labor, Health and Human Services, Education	\$49 million

Developmental Disabilities (PADD)		
University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)	Labor, Health and Human Services, Education	\$43.1 million
ACL/AIDD Projects of National Significance in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (PNS).	Labor, Health and Human Services, Education	\$12.25 million
Assistive Technology (AT) Act Programs	Labor, Health and Human Services, Education	\$42 million
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) (Autism CARES Act Program)	Labor, Health and Human Services, Education	At least \$28.1 million
The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Autism and Developmental Disabilities Program	Labor, Health and Human Services, Education	At least \$56.344 million
National Institutes of Health (NIH) Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC)	Labor, Health and Human Services, Education	At least \$306 million
Lifespan Respite Care Program	Labor, Health and Human Services, Education	\$20 million
National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP)	Labor, Health and Human Services, Education	Protect and increase funding for the National Family Caregiver Support Program.
Kevin and Avonte's Law Programs	Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies	At least \$3 million

Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSID) Model Demonstrations, National Coordination Center and National Technical Assistance and Dissemination Center	Labor, Health and Human Services Education/Office of Postsecondary Education	\$13.8 million
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Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act Programs

We respectfully request that the House and Senate Subcommittees on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies and House and Senate Appropriations Committees, provide FY2026 funding of \$85 million for the State and Territorial Councils on Developmental Disabilities (DD Councils), \$49 million for the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (PADD) program; \$43.1 million for the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD); and \$12.25 million under the ACL/AIDD program for the Projects of National Significance in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (PNS).

Congress established DD Councils, Protection and Advocacy agencies, and UCEDDs (DD Act programs) to improve the lives of people with I/DD through capacity building, systems change, advocacy, and the enforcement and protection of civil rights. The DD Act programs work with state governments, advocates, and other stakeholders to:

1. Invest in programs tailored to the needs of the state that help people with developmental disabilities live in the community;
2. Conduct extensive interdisciplinary training on cutting-edge service strategies and evidenced-based practices, continuing education, community training, research, model services, technical assistance, and information dissemination to promote community living;
3. Provide advocacy, and legal and direct services to ensure that children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities are free from abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.

We respectfully request continued support for the Administration for Community Living’s Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities’ Projects of National Significance (PNS). These projects play a vital role in addressing critical research gaps and supporting innovative demonstration initiatives that respond to emerging needs. PNS efforts include collecting and reporting longitudinal data on the costs, availability, and trends in residential, in-home, individual, family, and employment services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They also provide technical assistance to enhance service networks, disseminate best practices, and fund projects focused on areas such as cost-effective family supports, expanding employment opportunities, and ensuring a stable, qualified caregiving workforce. The data and insights generated by PNS are essential for policymakers and stakeholders to make informed, evidence-based decisions.

Assistive Technology Act Programs

We respectfully request that the House and Senate Subcommittees on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies and House and Senate Appropriations

Committees provide \$42 million in funding for FY2026 Assistive Technology (AT) Act programs. The AT Act provides critical funding for programs that assure people with disabilities can access and acquire the assistive technology devices and services they need to live, work, and attend school in their communities.

Statewide AT programs provide information and assistance, training, technical assistance, and coordination and collaboration of programs that are available for persons with all types of disabilities, all ages, in all environments (education, employment, community living and information technology). Programs include state financing activities (such as financial loans, cooperative buy, funds of last resort, etc.), device reutilization (including recycling, repair, refurbishment and device exchange), device loan/borrowing, and device demonstration services. While individuals with disabilities, their families, and guardians are the primary beneficiaries of services, the AT Act requires states AT programs to provide a wide range of services and supports to other stakeholders such as educators; employers; health care providers; rehabilitation providers; and technology experts including web designers, procurement officials, and AT manufacturers and vendors.

#### Autism CARES Act Programs

We respectfully request that the House and Senate Subcommittees on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies and House and Senate Appropriations Committees fund the following programs:

1. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) of at least \$28.1 million. NCBDDD activities, which include among other important programs and research, the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network (ADDM). This nationwide program tracks the prevalence and characteristics of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other developmental disabilities in children.
2. The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Autism and Developmental Disabilities Program supports training programs, research, and systems with a focus on improving access, quality, and systems of care for children, adolescents, and young adults with autism or other developmental disabilities from underserved backgrounds. (at least \$56.344 million) The funding will support the following programs:
  - a. \$38.2 million for Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities Program (LEND): Designed to train interdisciplinary professionals to improve healthcare and services for individuals with ASD and other developmental disabilities.
  - b. Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics (DBP) programs
  - c. Maternal and Child Health Bureau's (MCHB) Autism Research Program
3. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is the largest federal funder of ASD research. Its funding for autism research has been guided by the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC), which has articulated strategic objectives for autism research and funding levels necessary to address persistent gaps in such research (at least \$306 million).

Since the law was first enacted in 2006, this funding has helped to expand research and coordination, increase public awareness and surveillance, and expand interdisciplinary health professional training to identify and support people with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and their families. Congress overwhelmingly reauthorized this successful program. However, we must follow through with sufficient funding to provide interdisciplinary diagnostic services for hundreds of thousands of children, training and important research being conducted around the nation.

### Family Caregiver Support Programs

To address the growing need to support family caregivers who are the linchpin of the nation's long-term services and supports system, we are requesting to protect and increase funding in FY 2026 for Lifespan Respite Care Program and for the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP).

Lifespan Respite grants help states build respite capacity and improve quality by requiring states to focus on addressing respite provider/volunteer training and recruitment and start-up of new respite services. The program also helps family caregivers who struggle financially to pay for respite but are not eligible for any publicly funded respite services.

The NFCSP funds respite, counseling, support groups, and caregiver training for family caregivers. Despite recent positive outcomes for family caregivers reported in the NFCSP Outcome Evaluation from the Administration for Community Living, including the positive impact of respite and caregiver education on reducing caregiver burden, funding for NFCSP has not kept up with the increasing need.

### Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSID) programs

We respectfully request FY2026 funding of \$13.8 million for the Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual disability (TPSID) Model Demonstrations, TPSID National Coordination Center (NCC) and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities—National Technical Assistance and Dissemination Center (PPSID-NTAD) in the Office of Postsecondary Education. The funding for the TPSID Model Demonstrations, as authorized under Title VII, Part D of the Higher Education Act (P.L. 110-315), will be used to build on the important work being done to develop postsecondary opportunities for students with intellectual disability (ID) that lead to positive employment and independent living outcomes. It will provide institutes or consortia of institutions of higher education with the tools needed to create or expand high quality model comprehensive transition and postsecondary education programs for students with ID.

This funding will also support the two technical assistance centers, the TPSID National Coordinating Center (NCC) and the Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities—National Technical Assistance and Dissemination Center Program (PPSID-NTAD)), to nationally disseminate research, evaluation, and practices to programs within the Office of Postsecondary Education.

### Kevin and Avonte's Law Program

We respectfully request that the House and Senate Subcommittees on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies, and House and Senate Appropriations Committees, provide at least \$3 million to fund Kevin and Avonte's Law Programs for FY 2022. Also, we request report language directing the Attorney General to use these funds to supplement, not supplant, any discretionary funds at his disposal currently used for other training programs to ensure spending is consistent with congressional intent to prevent injuries and deaths due to wandering.

Kevin and Avonte's Law authorizes grants to local law enforcement and nonprofit agencies to address the life-threatening problem of wandering among people with disabilities, especially autism and dementia. It allocates funding to law enforcement agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other entities to develop technology for at-risk individuals, trains first responders and community members on how to handle missing person incidents and supports family outreach and education.

In conclusion, these funding increases are necessary to meet the needs of people with I/DD and their families who have been under fiscal constraints and continue to face considerable challenges. Assuring the levels of funding we request for FY 2026 recognizes the critical role for research, program development, education, advocacy, and training that protects the civil rights and enhances the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, and communities.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and your continued attention to these important national priorities. For more information please contact Erin Prangley, Co-Chair, CCD Task Force on Developmental Disabilities, Autism and Family Supports at [erprangley@nacdd.org](mailto:erprangley@nacdd.org).

Sincerely,

CCD Developmental Disabilities, Autism and Family Supports Task Force  
Access Ready Inc.  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association of People with Disabilities  
American Music Therapy Association  
American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR)  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
The Arc of the United States  
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Autism Speaks  
Autistic Self Advocacy Network  
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network  
Easterseals  
Institute for Exceptional Care  
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD)  
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)  
National Down Syndrome Congress  
National Respite Coalition  
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN)  
The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies  
Tourette Association of America  
United States International Council on Disabilities

cc:

The Honorable Shelly Moore Capito, Chair  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education, and Related Agencies  
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education, and Related Agencies  
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Robert Aderholt, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education, and Related Agencies  
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education, and Related Agencies  
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Jerry Moran, Chair  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, & Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, & Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Hal Rogers, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, & Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Robert Grace Meng, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, & Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations

*The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (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 mission of the task force is to advocate for federal public policies that directly relate to individuals with developmental disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, family supports and the prevention of child abuse and neglect. These include, but are not limited to, the Developmental Disabilities Act, Autism CARES Act, Lifespan Respite Care Act, National Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act.*

[www.c-c-d.org](http://www.c-c-d.org)