

Dear Senator/Representative **[Last Name]**,

I am writing to share my deep concern regarding the Fiscal Year 2026 budget proposal for the Administration for Children, Families, and Communities, which includes the elimination of discretionary funding for the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs). As a constituent and advocate for people with disabilities, I want to express how important it is for Members of Congress to strongly oppose this harmful proposal and protect these programs that are a vital part of our national disability infrastructure.

UCEDDs are congressionally authorized, federally funded programs established by the Developmental Disabilities and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act) with over 60 years of bipartisan support. The DD Act mandates that UCEDDs should be based at universities. The DD Act mandates that UCEDDs should be based at universities. This university affiliation enables UCEDDs to fulfill their core functions: community education, research, and direct assistance to individuals with developmental disabilities. UCEDDs serve as trusted institutions that support individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. They develop evidence-based practices, train the disability workforce, and partner with states on policy innovation and systems change.

These centers are intentionally positioned within the university system to leverage academic expertise and implement interdisciplinary approaches to training professionals serving the disability community. UCEDDs use federal funding for operations and generate seven times that amount through partnerships and grants that fund their work.

The [proposed budget](#) and [congressional justification](#) eliminate the UCEDDs and combine their funding with that of four other unique programs, folding them into a single funding stream to go to Independent Living Programs. The elimination of the programs and proposed block grant threatens the underlying purpose and populations served by each program. If implemented, at best this approach would force UCEDDs and these programs to be in direct competition for limited funding, risking inefficiency, underinvestment, and fragmentation of care. At worst the UCEDDs will be lost along with their decades of expertise and direct service to their communities. This would harm people with disabilities, research institutions, and the disability workforce nationwide.

The budget eliminates vital programs and block-grants funding to states without clear guidance, governance, or accountability mechanisms, shifting the burden to states to replicate national infrastructure without adequate capacity. UCEDD elimination would jeopardize decades of progress in areas like early intervention, inclusive education, health equity, and workforce development. Here's what the Administration is risking in our state: **[example of your UCEDD's work or collaboration with other UCEDDs]**.

There is bipartisan support for UCEDDs and their crucial role in the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Network. Your leadership is crucial now more than ever to protect the integrity of the UCEDDs. Please make a real difference for millions of Americans with disabilities and their families by protecting funding for the UCEDDs.

Sincerely,

**[Your Full Name]**  
**[Your Center/Program Name]**  
**[Your City], [Your State]**  
**[Optional: Contact Information]**