



Disability Network Warns: Eliminating ACL Will Endanger Lives, Erode Rights, and Collapse Community Supports for 1 in 4 Americans

On April 16, 2025, a 64-page draft budget proposal from Trump's administration's Office of Management and Budget (OMB), dated April 10, 2025, was leaked and became public.

The document, known as a "passback," included proposed major funding cuts to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Among those cuts are the complete elimination of large parts of the Administration for Community Living (ACL).

The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD), the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), and the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) stand unified in strong opposition to the President's proposed elimination of the Administration for Community Living (ACL).

This move does not represent a budget cut or a "reduction in bureaucracy and inefficiency". The elimination of ACL, as well as most of its programs, is a direct and deliberate attack on people with disabilities, their families, and the systems that protect their rights, health, and independence.

In 1975, Congress enacted a more comprehensive Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, which included the formation of:

- State Councils on Developmental Disabilities (DD Councils)
- Protection and Advocacy (P&A) systems
- University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs)

These programs were designed to empower states, ensure civil rights protections, and support systems change, all of which appealed across the aisle, ensuring bipartisan commitment.

Together, they form the DD Network, which is funded by and housed under ACL.

In the last year alone:

- **UCEDDs** provided essential services to over **1.3 million individuals**, and trained more than **620,000** community providers, families, and self-advocates across all 50 states.
- **56 Governor-appointed DD Councils** invested in over **900 projects that assisted people with disabilities to become independent and self-reliant**; and supported hundreds of community-based programs that build integrated education, employment, and housing



opportunities.

- **P&As protected the health, safety, and well-being of more than 11.5 million** individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities across the U.S. including U.S. territories, D.C., and in the four corners through systemic advocacy, individual assistance, and monitoring and investigating abuse and neglect in institutions and group facilities.

These aren't abstract numbers. They represent real people who depend on these programs for healthcare access, educational support, civil rights protections, community living, and self-determination.

One in four Americans have a disability. The proposed elimination of ACL threatens vital programs that directly support individuals with disabilities, older Americans, and their families. Additionally, eliminating the agency undermines decades of progress and puts people at greater risk of institutionalization, isolation, and neglect.

If this proposal is adopted and enacted, it would:

- Cut off vital services to people with disabilities and their families.
- Eliminate training pipelines for the disability workforce, removing workers who pay taxes and contribute to their community.
- Slash support for education, healthcare, and employment systems.
- Increase unnecessary institutionalization and erode civil rights.

At the same time, Congress is debating cutting \$880 billion from Medicaid that would directly impact people with disabilities, older Americans, and others who rely on this resource for everyday life. If ACL is eliminated, it would increase the risk of institutionalization. It would call for an increase in funding Medicaid to support these institutions.

Eliminating ACL and its programs is not fiscal responsibility or efficiency. It sends a clear and dangerous message: that the federal government no longer values people with disabilities or their right to participate fully in society.

ACL's formation in 2012 was a result of bipartisan effort. It *increased* efficiency and collaboration among programs that support older Americans and people with disabilities, two populations in the country that have similar needs for services and supports.

Were this Administration actually dedicated to "Making America Healthy Again" it would seek to *improve* the systems that currently provide life and health-giving supports to people with disabilities.



We call on Congress to reject this short-sighted and harmful proposal and fully fund the ACL and the programs it supports. Our organizations, and the communities we serve, will not be silent while lives, rights, and futures hang in the balance.

Source: [Washington Post](#)