



How Congress Works

Donna Meltzer, NACDD

Rachel Patterson, AUCD



AAIDD | The Arc | AUCD | NACDD | SABE | UCP

Washington: What's Going On?!

Extremely
partisan

No Clear
Ruling
Majority

Ideological
Divide

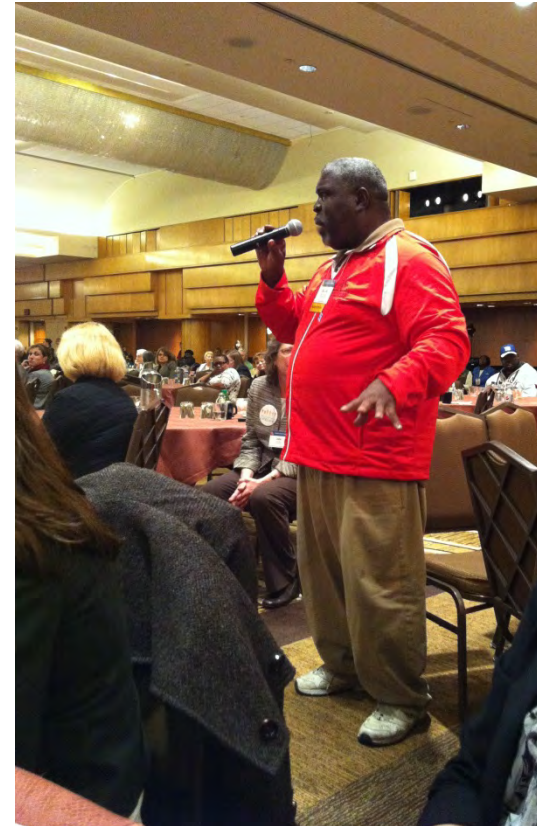
Focus on Debt
& Deficit



AAIDD | The Arc | AUCD | NACDD | SABLE | UCP

What is advocacy?

- Influencing public policy
- Not just new laws but also:
 - Seeking adequate funding
 - Making sure laws are implemented, interpreted, and enforced correctly



How to advocate

Helpful to understand:

- Legislative and regulatory processes
 - How are policies made?
 - Timeline for decisions
- Who the key policymakers are
- Political Climate
- Current and Key Issues



3 Branches of Government



Executive Branch
President &
Administration



Legislative Branch
Congress
House & Senate



Judicial Branch
Courts



AAIDD | The Arc | AUCD | NACDD | SABE | UCP

President & Administration

- Comes up with ideas for new laws
- Writes the rules that make the laws work (regulations)
- Enforces Laws
- Signs or vetoes bills
- Has access to the media



Executive Cabinet



Secretary of Health
& Human Services
Kathleen Sebelius



Secretary of
Education
Arne Duncan

House of Representatives



- 435 Members
- Two-year terms
- More rules
- More focused on regional issues



AAIDD | The Arc | AUCD | NACDD | SABE | UCP

Senate

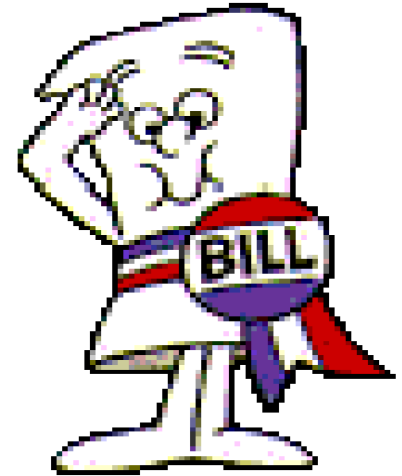


- 100 Members
- Six-year terms
- Fewer rules, more individual power
- Focused on national issues
- Filibuster – use of parliamentary procedures to delay or kill bills



How a bill becomes law

- Introduced by Member of Congress
- Sent to Committee/Subcommittee
- Hearings and markups held
- House or Senate debates
- Conference Committee meets
- House and Senate approve compromise
- President signs into law



Federal Budget Process

- Submission of President's Budget
- Passage of Budget Resolution (BR)
- Sometimes the BR contains instructions called Budget Reconciliation
- Enactment of 13 appropriations bills
- President signs or vetoes
- Continuing Resolutions for bills not passed



Federal Budget

- Authorization – establishes or continues (reauthorization) an agency or program
- Appropriations – funds the authorized programs
- Discretionary spending (1/3 budget)
- Entitlement/mandatory spending – for programs guaranteed to eligible individuals a specified level of benefits, e.g. SSI and Medicaid (2/3 budget)



Budget Timeline

How it is supposed to happen...

- President submits budget –usually early February
- Congress enacts concurrent Budget Resolution –by April 15
- Budget reconciliation
- 302(b) allocations
- H&S agree on 13 annual appropriations bills – Sept.
- Fiscal year begins Oct. 1



This year...

- Government Shutdown October 2013
- Bipartisan Budget Act in December 2013 for this year (FY14) and next (FY15)
- President's Budget in March
- Appropriations Committees already working
- House Budget from Chairman Ryan just out
- Senate using Bipartisan Budget Act as blueprint



Key Senate Committees

- Appropriations
 - Barbara Mikulski, MD
 - Richard Shelby, AL
 - Labor-Health-Education Subcommittee
 - Harkin, IA
 - Moran, KS
- Budget
 - Patty Murray, WA
 - Jeff Sessions, AL
- Finance
 - Ron Wyden, OR
 - Orrin Hatch, UT
- Health, Education, Labor & Pension
 - Tom Harkin, IA
 - Lamar Alexander, TN
- Foreign Relations
 - Robert Menendez, NJ
 - Bob Corker, TN



Key House Committees

- Appropriations
 - Harold Rogers, KY
 - Nita Lowey, NY
 - Labor-Health-Education Subcommittee
 - Kingston, GA
 - DeLauro, NY
- Budget
 - Paul Ryan, WI
 - Chris Van Hollen, MD
- Education & Workforce
 - John Kline, MN
 - George Miller, CA
- Energy & Commerce
 - Fred Upton, MI
 - Henry Waxman, CA
- Ways and Means
 - Dave Camp, MI
 - Sander Levin, MI



What can you do?

1

Write letters

2

Make phone calls and personal visits

3

Write letters to the editor

4

Organize and participate in coalitions

5

Hold candidate forums to educate voters

6

Invite congressional delegation to your center

7

Come to the Disability Policy Seminar



AAIDD | The Arc | AUCD | NACDD | SABE | UCP



Sen. Mikulski speaks at 2011 DPS

AAIDD | The Arc | AUCD | NACDD | SABLE | UCP





With Senator Harkin at Hill Reception 2012



AAIDD | The Arc | AUCD | NACDD | SABE | UCP

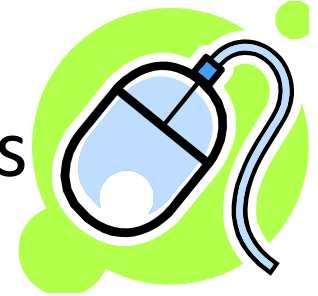
DPS Hill Day!

Wednesday April 9!



AAIDD | The Arc | AUCD | NACDD | SABE | UCP

Resources

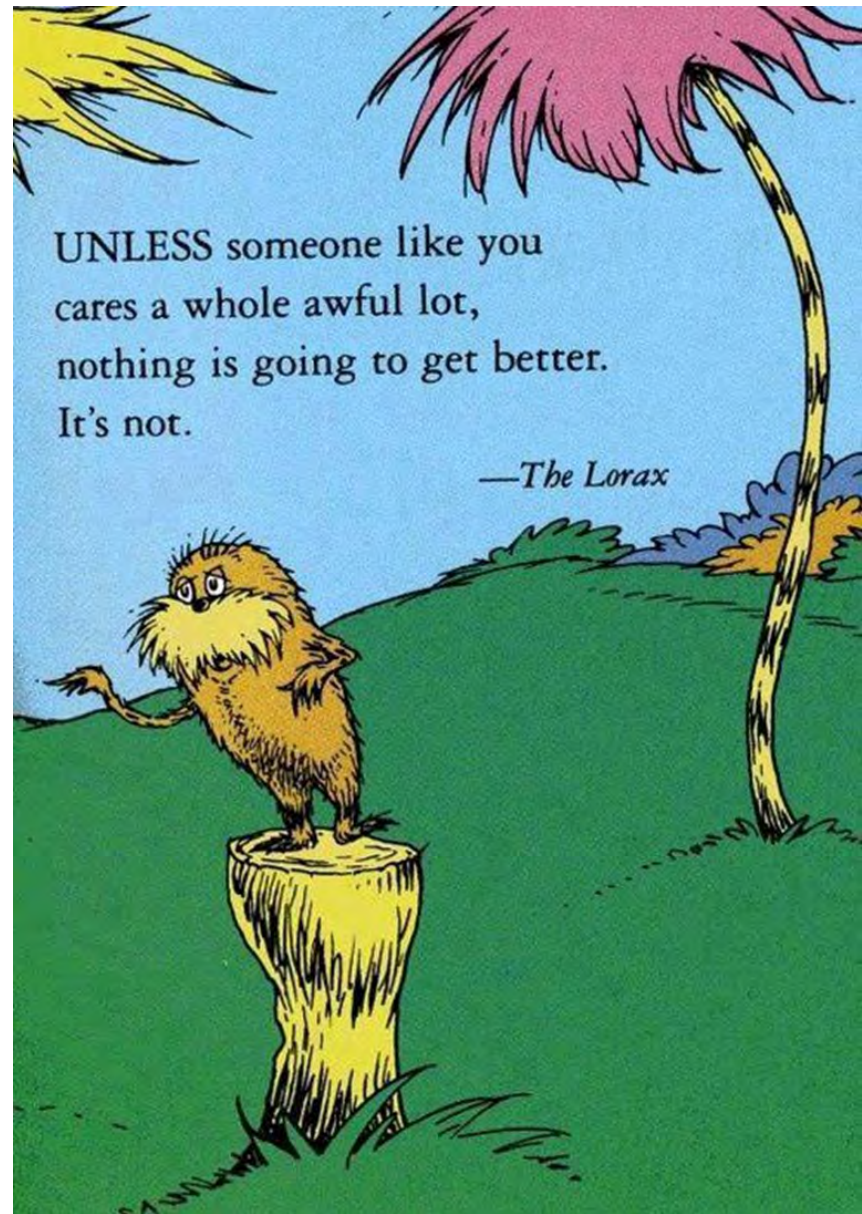


- Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities
www.c-c-d.org
- AUCD: www.aucd.org
- NACDD: www.nacdd.org
- AAIDD: www.aaidd.org
- UCP: www.ucp.org
- The Arc: www.thearc.org
- SABE: www.sabeusa.org



Thank you!

Questions?



AAIDD | The Arc | AUCD | NACDD | SABLE | UCP