



DON'T CUT OUR LIFELINE



What are Key Messages to Share with Your Member of Congress?

For a meeting with your Members of Congress, make sure you review and use the [Community Living Fact Sheet](#) and [Social Security Fact Sheet](#)

In this toolkit, you will find fact sheets with recommendations for how Congress can support our lifeline, including Medicaid and Social Security Disability Insurance. Use these fact sheets to learn more about the issues and for key recommendations.

Be sure to share the recommendations in the fact sheets with your Member of Congress, and bring copies of the fact sheets with you to share at meetings.

But it's your voice—and your story—that can really help your Member of Congress to understand why these recommendations are important and personal for you, and for other people in your state and Congressional district. And why protecting our lifeline should be a priority for your Member of Congress.

What makes a good story?

- It is about you or someone close to you
- It is on topic—it is linked to Medicaid or Social Security
- It is short and clear but includes messages about how the programs are important to you
- It helps the person better understand the issue, and supports the “ask” that you are making.

Sample Messages: To help you tell your story and connect to what Congress is planning your stories:

Congress must strengthen and preserve Medicaid. Cuts to Medicaid could increase waiting lists for home and community based services or lead to cuts to existing supports.

- I (or my family member/friend) cannot afford to pay more for health care services
- I need the services provided to live and work in the community—I have no other alternatives

Congress must strengthen and preserve Social Security, including Social Security Disability Insurance. Any cuts would hurt people with

disabilities and seniors who rely on this lifeline.

- I need my Social Security benefits to help me live in the community
- I cannot afford a cut to my Social Security Disability Insurance

Sample Questions: To ask Members of Congress at **Town Hall meetings** or other community meetings:

- Medicaid provides access to health care and critical long term supports and services to people with I/DD. What would you do to protect this program from deep cuts and structural changes?
- Social Security Disability Insurance is a lifeline for millions of Americans with disabilities and their families. What is your plan to prevent cuts in this vital program?

Sample story

(Fill in blank with person's name or name and last initial) lives in (fill in city and state) and has (fill in disability). He has been living in a group home since 1982 after both of his parents passed away.

X receives Social Security in addition to Medicaid long term supports and services. These programs provide him with a place to live and assistance with many basic activities of daily living such as communicating, preparing meals, taking medications, and getting around the community. They are used to pay for in-home support staff, transportation, and job placement and coaching services, in addition to food, clothing, and incidental expenses. For instance, Medicaid helped X secure a part time job doing something he loves.

Social Security and Medicaid are a lifeline for X as they provide him with needed support, stability, and opportunities to participate in community life. If not for these programs, X would likely become homeless.



For people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

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