

May 24, 2022

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
United States Senate
503 Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rob Portman
United States Senate
448 Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC 20510

Subject: Support for the SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act

Dear Senators Brown and Portman:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations dedicated to improving the lives of older adults and people with disabilities, we enthusiastically endorse the *SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act* (S. 4102), which – for the first time in over 30 years – would raise the amount of assets Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients can save without jeopardizing their vital SSI benefits.

SSI provides an extremely modest cash benefit, a maximum of \$841 a month in 2022, for low-income individuals with disabilities and older adults that meet the program's strict means-tested criteria. As of March 2022, nearly 7.6 million people relied on SSI to meet their basic needs: 4.3 million working-age individuals with disabilities; 1 million children with disabilities; and 2.3 million older adults.

Unfortunately, SSI's low, outdated resource limit of \$2,000 for individuals/\$3,000 for couples does not allow people to save for emergencies, such as a leaky roof, car repair, or other unexpected expenses. This makes it difficult for them to weather these crises. To make matters worse, the \$2,000 asset limit does not adjust for inflation every year; in fact, the limit has remained the same since 1989 even though today's cost of living is nearly 2.5 times higher.

The SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act would significantly improve the lives of SSI recipients by raising the asset limit to \$10,000 per individual/\$20,000 per couple. The legislation also adjusts that number for inflation every year, a critical element in today's inflationary environment. This will allow SSI beneficiaries to use their own savings to address needed emergencies when they arise. [JPMorgan Chase](#) recently noted that SSI's outdated asset limit makes it difficult for SSI beneficiaries to achieve any measure of economic security and called for it to be modernized.

Thank you again for your leadership in introducing this critical legislation. We look forward to working with you to ensure this important change becomes law. If you have any questions,

please contact David Goldfarb, The Arc's Director of Financial Security Policy, at goldfarb@thearc.org/ (202) 534-3729.

Sincerely,

AARP

Alliance for Retired Americans

American Association on Health and Disability

Amputee Coalition

The Arc of the United States

Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE)

Association of University Centers on Disabilities

Autism Society of America

Autistic Self Advocacy Network

Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network

Caring Across Generations

Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Community Legal Services of Philadelphia

Cure SMA

Disability Policy Consortium

Easterseals

Epilepsy Foundation

The Gerontological Society of America

The Jewish Federations of North America

Justice in Aging

Lakeshore Foundation

Medicare Rights Center

Muscular Dystrophy Association

National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA)

National Alliance on Mental Illness

National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities

National Association of Social Workers

National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare

National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care

National Council on Aging

National Council on Independent Living

National Disability Institute

National Down Syndrome Congress

National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives (NOSSCR)

National PLAN Alliance

National Women's Law Center

Paralyzed Veterans of America

SourceAmerica

Special Needs Alliance

The Viscardi Center

Well Spouse Association