

Winning the Future for People with Disabilities

Having emerged from the worst recession in generations, the President has put forward a plan to rebuild our economy and win the future by out-innovating, out-educating, and out-building our global competitors and creating the jobs and industries of tomorrow. But we cannot rebuild our economy and win the future if we pass on a mountain of debt to our children and grandchildren. We must restore fiscal responsibility, and reform our government to make it more effective, efficient, and open to the American people. The President's 2012 Budget is a responsible approach that puts the nation on a path to live within our means so we can invest in our future – by cutting wasteful spending and making tough choices on some things we cannot afford, while keeping the investments we need to grow the economy and create jobs. It targets scarce federal resources to the areas critical to winning the future: education, innovation, clean energy, and infrastructure. And it proposes to reform how Washington does business, putting more federal funding up for competition, cutting waste, and reorganizing government so that it better serves the American people.

To win the future for people with disabilities, the Budget will:

Increase Funding for the Education of Children with Disabilities. The Budget provides a \$200 million increase for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) State Grants to provide a high quality education and help offset State and local education costs for children with disabilities. The Budget also provides a \$50 million (11 percent) increase for the IDEA Infants and Families Program to provide the youngest children a good start. In addition, a new \$30 million joint pilot, Promoting Readiness of Minors in SSI (PROMISE), will develop and evaluate innovative approaches to improving outcomes of children receiving Supplemental Security Income and their families.

Encourage Workforce Innovation. The Budget provides almost \$380 million to the Departments of Education and Labor, for a Workforce Innovation Fund to support reforms of the workforce system, including projects that improve education and employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The Vocational Rehabilitation program will contribute \$30 million, and use its expertise to help ensure that the Fund invests in innovative programs and evidence-based practices to provide high-quality employment services to individuals with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities.

Support Workers with Disabilities. The Budget provides \$24 million to the Department of Labor for the Disability Employment Initiative, which awards grants to build the capacity of One-Stop Career Centers to serve individuals with disabilities. The Budget also proposes a new Disability Insurance Work Incentives Simplification Pilot to make the Social Security work rules more straightforward and allow beneficiaries more flexibility to try to work without fear of losing their benefits.

Reduce Social Security Claims Backlog. Disability programs are at the forefront of the Social Security Administration's (SSA's) operations. The Budget funds SSA to lower the initial claims backlog to 650,000 by processing over three million claims. By hearing approximately 822,500

cases in 2012, the wait time for a decision will fall below a year for the first time in a decade. In addition, the Administration will establish a Disability Research Center through SSA's research office. This Center will work across agencies and in collaboration with outside researchers to improve the quality of disability research.

Expand Disability Research. The Budget provides \$120 million for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), including \$10 million to support a new cloud computing initiative that uses the internet infrastructure to improve technology access through the development, implementation, and delivery of mechanisms that will provide on-demand accessibility for everyone who faces technology accessibility barriers. NIDRR conducts comprehensive and coordinated programs of research and related activities to maximize the full inclusion, social integration, employment, and independent living of individuals with disabilities of all ages.

Strengthen Independent Living. The Budget includes more than \$103 million for Grants for Independent Living program that would provide formula grants to States to support the provision of independent living services through centers for independent living. The Budget also provides an additional \$34 million for independent living services for older individuals who are blind. In addition, the President's six-year, \$556 billion surface transportation reauthorization proposal supports investments to provide individuals, including the elderly and the disabled, with access to more transportation options, making our communities more livable. That proposal will include an unprecedented funding commitment for transit programs.

Assist Programs for Youth with Disabilities. The 2012 Budget maintains funding for the Special Olympics at \$8 million through the Department of Education. The Budget also provides \$5 million for a new program: Mentoring for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities. Both programs would support activities to increase the participation of people with intellectual disabilities in social relationships and other aspects of community life, including recreation, education, and employment.

Strengthen Anti-Discrimination Enforcement. Even in tough budget times, the substantial investments that have been made by the Administration to strengthen civil rights enforcement against racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, disability, religious, and gender discrimination continue in the 2012 Budget. The Budget proposes an increase for the Community Relations Service in the Department of Justice to fight hate crimes and provides an \$18 million, a 5 percent increase over the 2010 enacted level, for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which is responsible for enforcing Federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee. This investment will allow EEOC to add additional staff to reduce the agency's backlog of private-sector discrimination charges.

Provide Housing for Persons with Disabilities. Because difficult choices had to be made in order to invest in programs that would yield the highest returns, the Budget provides a total of \$196 million for the Housing for Persons with Disabilities Program, which is a \$104 million cut relative to the 2010 enacted level. The majority of the overall reduction reflects a shift in funding to the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance account to support Mainstream Vouchers for persons with disabilities. The Budget includes \$85 million to support existing units and \$111

million for new construction and expansion activities. The Administration is committed to working with Congress to update and reform these programs so that project sponsors can maximize use of the funding for new construction by effectively leveraging and targeting investments based on need and by providing residents access to key services required to live independently.

Expand Research into Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The Budget continues to expand research, detection, treatment, and other activities related to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by ASD through increasing funding for programs at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Health Resources and Services Administration. NIH will pursue comprehensive and innovative approaches to defining the genetic and environmental factors that contribute to ASD, investigate epigenomic changes in the brain, and accelerate clinical trials of novel pharmacological and behavioral interventions by 2016. NIH will continue to investigate environmental factors, early detection, and novel treatments to transform our understanding of ASD.

Help Families Care for Aging and Relatives with Disabilities. The Budget includes \$96 million for the Administration's Caregiver Initiative, an effort to expand help to families and seniors so that caregivers can better manage their multiple responsibilities and seniors can live in the community for as long as possible. Without creating new programs, this initiative provides new resources to support the network of agencies in local communities across the country that already provide critical help to seniors and caregivers.

Support for Employment of People with Disabilities in the Federal Workforce. In July 2010, the President signed an Executive Order to increase Federal employment of individuals with disabilities and the Budget provides funds to the Office of Personnel Management to implement that Executive Order.

Expand Passenger Rail Options. The President's surface transportation reauthorization proposal includes funding to eliminate the longstanding ADA gap at intercity passenger rail stations. Overall, the Administration's reauthorization provides \$53 billion over six years for intercity passenger rail, putting the country on track toward a system that gives 80 percent of Americans access to high-speed rail within 25 years – and would provide many citizens with disabilities access to an additional, convenient transportation option.