



March 2, 2021

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR), I thank you for voting for the dedicated funding for Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) in the current COVID-19 relief package. Strengthening the Medicaid HCBS program is essential to saving lives in the disability community, which has been particularly hard-hit by the pandemic. We appreciate your efforts to ensure that this vital program can (1) meet the needs of individuals who rely on it now and (2) remain viable after the pandemic.

ANCOR is a national, nonprofit trade association representing more than 1,600 community-based providers of services to people with intellectual / developmental disabilities (I/DD). Combined, we support over one million individuals with disabilities, and work to shape policy, share solutions and strengthen community. The Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) our members employ are on the frontlines of the pandemic. DSPs support people with disabilities to remain safe at home—rather than in large-scale congregate settings where they are more likely to contract COVID-19—by assisting with essential tasks such as grocery shopping, performing daily hygiene routines and making good health decisions.

The HCBS program funds the majority of the disability supports in the United States that enable people to live in the community. During the pandemic, HCBS has been a lifeline to a community particularly vulnerable to the worst effects of COVID-19. The increased expenses of keeping everyone safe is making the HCBS program more fiscally fragile than it was before the pandemic. We appreciate your effort to direct funding specifically to the HCBS program to bolster it at this time of heightened vulnerability. Right now, participating providers are at a financial breaking point, facing exponential increases in overtime and personal protective equipment costs while losing revenue from having to close lines of service to comply with social distancing directives. The funding this legislation provides will be critical to the survival of these organizations during and after the pandemic.

We are thankful for your vote to champion the needs of people with I/DD and the DSPs that support them during this unprecedented pandemic, and we look forward to working to ensure that necessary HCBS funding is passed in Senate and signed into law by President Biden. For more information or to discuss further, please feel free to contact me at smeek@ancor.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Meek". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sarah Meek
Senior Director of Legislative Affairs