

➤ *Budget Bill Could Lead to Disability Services Cuts*

The U.S. Senate adopted its Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 budget resolution on October 19th. The U.S. House of Representatives approved the Senate resolution on October 26th. The resolution allows House and Senate committees to draft bills that will increase the federal deficit by up to \$1.5 trillion over 10 years. Under special rules called reconciliation, such legislation would only require a simple majority (51 votes) in the Senate to pass during FY 18.



A budget resolution is not a legally binding document; it provides a blueprint for federal spending and revenues for the next decade and empowers particular House and Senate committees to take action on the budget for the coming year. Now that this resolution has passed the House and Senate, both chambers of Congress can develop legislation to reduce taxes and make changes to the tax code, a high priority of congressional Republican leadership and the White House.

The Senate budget resolution assumes more than \$5 trillion in federal budget cuts over the next decade. The resolution does not require those cuts, but The Arc is concerned that these proposals will open the door for cuts to supports for people with disabilities and their families, including Medicaid. Click [here](#) for an analysis on how potential tax cuts that could add significantly to the deficit may affect programs for people with disabilities. Also, read [The Arc of the U.S. statement](#) about the budget resolution and

The vote on the resolution in the U.S. House was 216-212. Minnesota Representatives Tom Emmer, Jason Lewis, and Erik Paulsen voted in favor the resolution; Representatives Keith Ellison, Betty McCollum, Rick Nolan, Collin Peterson, and Tim Walz voted no. The Senate vote on the budget resolution was 51 to 49. Minnesota Senators Al Franken and Amy Klobuchar opposed this resolution.

➤ *Talk to Our Staff About Microgrants!*

Since the Minnesota Microgrant Partnership was launched on October 2nd, applications have been coming from across Minnesota with ideas from people with disabilities who want small amounts of funding to reach their goals around competitive, integrated employment, inclusive housing and community integration.

Our microgrant program staff, Wendy Gerlach (left) and Susan Sochaki (right), can answer your questions about the Microgrant program. Reach Wendy at wendyg@arcmn.org or 651-604-8070; reach Susan at susans@arcmn.org or 651-604-8056. They can walk you through the microgrant application and discuss any related questions you may have. You can also fill out [a grant application](#) through the [microgrant page on our website](#).



➤ *Bob Can Help You Take Control of Your Plans for Employment*

One week from now, The Arc Minnesota, The Arc Midstate, and A Working Life Alliance are holding a free “Taking Control of YOUR Employment Future” workshop on Thursday, November 2, 2017. This workshop will show job seekers with disabilities the steps needed to craft a workable plan to guide their search for competitive employment. It will run from 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Great River Regional Library in St. Cloud, Minnesota.



Bob Niemiec (photo), a national trainer in customized employment from the agency Griffin-Hammis Associates, will be the main presenter. Bob will go through a three-step process that will help increase one’s chances for success in finding meaningful and satisfying employment. The methods discussed will apply to all types of job seekers, families, supporters, and situations. There will be ample time for questions and discussion. A light lunch and beverages will be served. If you have any questions or would like to sign up for the event, contact Cindy Owen at The Arc Midstate, 320-251-7272 or cowen@arcmidstate.org. Now is the time to take a closer look at crafting YOUR plan for successful competitive employment!

➤ *A Good Meeting with Rep. Lewis’ Aide*

Volunteers and staff from the Brain Injury Alliance of Minnesota, The Arc Greater Twin Cities, and The Arc Minnesota met with Jack Dwyer, District Director for Rep. Jason Lewis (Minnesota’s 2nd Congressional District) on October 26th. They discussed how vital the Medicaid program is for people with disabilities and their families. Deborah del Castillo, Heather Tidd, and Debbi Harris (Board Member for The Arc Minnesota and The Arc Greater Twin Cities) all shared powerful personal and family stories about the necessity of the Medicaid program in their lives. It was a good opportunity for Rep. Lewis’ staff to hear the experiences of his constituents, and we hope to be able to present ideas for improving Medicaid to Rep. Lewis in the future.

➤ *Parent Feedback Needed Through AT Survey*

The Minnesota Department of Education wants to hear from parents with school-age children with disabilities. Specifically, it has created [a survey](#) to find out more about the efforts made by your child’s school to identify and make appropriate assistive technology (AT) decisions as part of your child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Assistive technology includes a range of items from no-tech/low tech items like pencil grips, to mid-tech items like voice-activated software and tablet computers, to high-tech items like digital hearing aids or power wheelchairs and scooters. If you have more than one child who has an IFSP or IEP, please respond to this survey thinking about the experience you have had with just one of your children. Please complete [the survey](#) by Wednesday, November 8th.

➤ *Get Ready to Give to the Max*

November is just around the corner, and that means it’s time to get ready to Give to the Max. Thursday, November 16, 2017 is the official Give to the Max Day -- an easy way to support the work of The Arc Minnesota. Starting next week, we will share stories about the people we advocate for and support so they can be full members of their communities. Look for these stories in upcoming *Public Policy Updates* and on social media, and thanks in advance for your support!

