

Dear Policy Watchers,

As we move into the final months and weeks of the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress's first session, it is clear this is not "business as usual" in Washington. Not only will Congress fail to pass critical appropriations (funding) bills on time, but lawmakers will pause much of their work to focus on investigative hearings on whether President Trump [committed an impeachable offense](#) when he allegedly put our national security at risk by having an inappropriate conversation with the President of Ukraine.

Dozens of members – many of whom are in leadership positions serve on the House committees that are now charged with investigating whether to have a vote on impeachment. This surely means the House will have a hard time finding time to work on other legislation. If House members ultimately vote to impeach President Trump, the matter would go to the Senate where there would have to be a two-thirds majority vote to ultimately convict and remove President Trump.

It is important to understand why the Constitution provides for impeachment and removal of a president. For more information on impeachment I'd recommend this short [Vox article](#) that gives a very good summary of the issues. [Click here](#) if you want more information.

Now on to other news...

**RSVP for the FEMA Emergency Preparedness Webinar hosted by NACDD next Thursday.**

September is Emergency Preparedness Month. In just a few days, Linda Mastandrea, the Director of [FEMA's Office of Disability Integration and Coordination](#), will be headlining a webinar specifically for DD Council members, staff, self-advocates and supporters next Thursday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 3pm EST. This is an incredible opportunity to hear the inside workings of how FEMA is trying to improve access for people with disabilities before, during, and after disasters. Look out for an invitation to this special webinar following this email!

**Disability Coalitions Host Emergency Preparedness Briefing on Capitol Hill.** As co-chair of the CCD Taskforce on Emergency Management, NACDD joined several coalitions in organizing a [briefing](#) on Capitol Hill to educate members of Congress and their staff about the needs of people with disabilities before, during and after disaster. Several self-advocates spoke on their personal experience living through Hurricanes Harvey and Michael. NCD Attorney Advisor Amy Nicholas discussed NCD's report [Preserving Our Freedom: Ending Institutionalization of People with Disabilities During and After Disasters](#). We also advocated for the passage of the READDI For Disaster Act and Disaster Medicaid Relief Act. Please remember to take steps to be prepared for emergencies. Check out [Ready.gov/disability](#) for more information and resources on emergency preparedness.

**Meanwhile, the Appropriations Show Must Go On.** On Thursday [the Senate approved HR 4378](#)[the Senate approved HR 4378](#), the continuing resolution that will prevent a government shutdown until at least November 21<sup>st</sup> of this year. The bill now goes to President Trump's desk to be signed, and it appears to have a veto-proof majority if for some reason the President surprises everyone by pulling his support. It's worth disclaiming that nothing is ever certain in this town, but, barring a huge surprise, it does look like Congress has bought themselves a few months of breathing room to settle these budget debates. As always, you can expect to hear from NACDD CEO Donna Meltzer if any new developments in the ongoing budget saga look to impact council funding.

**Ohio DD Council Visits Capitol Hill.** This week, Ohio advocates from the Ohio Developmental Disability Council and Ohio Centers for Independent Living stormed Capitol Hill to educate Ohio's members of Congress on the important work of the DD Council, initiatives to increase employment for people with developmental disabilities, and other important issues. Paul Jarvis, Liaison Officer for the Ohio DD Council, provided an excellent training session for participants that featured Roger Severino, Director of the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Director Severino spoke about the [important work](#) his department is doing to end discrimination against people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are sometimes excluded or given less priority on state organ transplant lists. "No one should be blocked from access to an organ transplant because of stereotypes about persons with disabilities. It is also against the law," he said. Check out the [Ohio DD Council's Facebook](#) page to see some great photos of their visit!



**National Council on Disabilities (NCD) Releases Organ Transplant Discrimination Report.** NCD released the first of five reports in a bioethics and disability series and calls on the government

to issue federal guidance on organ transplant discrimination. The report, [Organ Transplant Discrimination Against People with Disabilities](#), shows that even though the ADA and the Rehabilitation Act prohibit discrimination in organ transplant decisions, disability-related policies vary greatly across organ transplant centers and across categories of disability. Many centers may have a current or past policy that treats HIV or AIDS, psychiatric disabilities, or intellectual and developmental disabilities as relative or absolute contraindications to transplant. Only 9 states have laws prohibiting this discrimination. You can read the report [here](#).

**But because you want to do more, PLEASE share the NCD report on social media.** [Click here](#) to share the report on Facebook or [here to share the report on Twitter](#).

**Another Try for Anti-Bullying Bill.** Senator [Bob Casey](#) (D-PA) plans to re-introduce the [Safe Schools Improvement Act](#) in the Senate, and NACDD promptly sent an official endorsement. Senator [Bob Casey](#) (D-PA) plans to re-introduce the [Safe Schools Improvement Act](#) in the Senate, and NACDD promptly sent an official endorsement. Spurred by data on bullying regularly collected by [GLSEN](#) (the “Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network”), the legislation would require school districts to adopt codes of conduct specifically prohibiting bullying and harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and religion. Students with disabilities who also members of other marginalized groups often face multiple oppressions and discrimination that shape the lived experiences. Currently only 21 states plus DC have all of these requirements in place. We believe Senator Casey has been pushing for versions of this bill for several congresses now, and this time he is joined by Representative [Linda Sanchez](#) (D-CA) who introduced the bill in the House this spring. With all of the talk about school safety is improved when policies like SSIA are in place and students are able to live their fullest lives. As Congress discusses guns in schools, we want to push them to focus more on proven school safety policies, like SSIA.

**Increase in Number of Children with I/DD... Maybe.** The CDC released a new data set in the journal *Pediatrics* that measured the number of children diagnosed with I/DD, and the numbers show an increase in prevalence over the past decade. However, don’t discount the [article’s conclusion](#):

“Changes by demographic and socioeconomic subgroups may be related to improvements in awareness and access to health care.”

Awareness-building matters! And while data sets like this one are often too general to build specific policy arguments around, they’re great foundation-setting points for policy arguments across the board.

**Save the Date! Defending Our Rights in Federal Courts Conference Call on October 7.** NACDD's upcoming Quarterly Policy Call on Monday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm EST. Friend of NACDD [Alison Barkoff](#) will be stopping by to talk about a pair of amicus briefs that NACDD has joined in the past year regarding the [ACA](#) and [immigration](#). All are welcome to join and listen. The call-in number is 800-832-0736 and passcode is 6261788.

Finally, as many of us will celebrate the Jewish New Year, on Rosh Hashanah I wish you all peace, happiness, good luck, blessings and success in the coming year. L'shanah Tovah! Happy Rosh Hashanah!

Questions? Comments? Concerns? You can always reach me at [eprangley@nacdd.org](mailto:eprangley@nacdd.org).

Sincerely,

Erin Prangley  
Director, Policy  
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities