



May 4, 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 Arc of the United States, we enthusiastically endorse S. 4102, *the SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act*, which would raise the amount of savings a Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipient can keep for the first time in over thirty years. The mission of the Arc is to promote and protect the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and actively support their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.

SSI provides an extremely modest cash benefit, a maximum of \$841 a month in 2022, for certain individuals with disabilities and older adults. In March 2022, nearly 7.6 million people: 4.3 million working-age individuals with disabilities; 1 million children with disabilities; and 2.3 million older adults relied on the program.

Many individuals with IDD rely on the SSI program. In 2017, SSA estimated that approximately 19% of working-age SSI recipients possessed an intellectual disability. For many people with IDD, SSI is their only source of income without which they could become institutionalized or homeless.

Unfortunately, the benefit's low, outdated resource limit of \$2,000 for individuals/\$3,000 for couples does not allow people to save for emergencies, such as a leaky roof, car repair, or other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 expense. To make matters worse, the \$2,000 limit does not adjust for inflation every year, and it has remained the same since 1989.

The SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act would significantly improve the lives of SSI recipients, including people with IDD, 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.

Thank you again for 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,

David Goldfarb
Director of Financial Security Policy
The Arc of the United States

CC: Senate Finance Committee