



REV UP Voting Issues Guide

**A Tool for Voters and Candidates to Understand
Key Issues Impacting People with Disabilities**

This guide is made by the American Association of People with Disabilities' REV UP Voting Campaign. REV UP is a national nonpartisan coalition building the power of the disability vote. REV UP stands for "Register! Educate! Vote! Use your Power!"

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Part 1: What are disability issues?

All issues are disability issues! As people with disabilities, we are impacted by policies and decisions about healthcare, government budgets, policing, employment, housing, and so much more. In this guide, we will talk about some of the issues that are important to people with disabilities.

These issues have everything to do with why we vote. Our votes help decide the people and policies that shape our lives.

It is also important to know that, as a diverse disabled community, different issues will impact each of us differently and our policy priorities will vary. Each of us votes for many reasons. This guide talks about some of these important issues and how they impact people with disabilities.



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**VOTE AS IF YOUR
LIFE DEPENDS ON IT
BECAUSE IT DOES!**

JUSTIN DART

FATHER OF THE ADA AND CO-FOUNDER OF
THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES (AAPD)

Part 2: How do our votes lead to change?

There are many ways your vote can lead to change. Voting is a way to live a self-determined life by influencing the people and policies that affect your everyday life. Here are a few examples showing how your vote can lead to a difference in your life and in your community.



Elected Officials

One way your vote can make change is through the people you vote for. The person who gets the most votes in each position, and wins the election, is called the elected official. Elected officials make decisions on behalf of you and your community. They represent you on the local, state, and national level. Some of these positions include U.S. Senator or Representative, school board member, city council member, mayor, and many other positions.

School board members make decisions on how public schools in your community operate. This means they have a say on school policy, budgets, activities, teachers, and staff. For example, school boards often decide if students and staff need to wear masks in school. School boards also often decide what books can be read in schools.

City council members review, edit, and approve the city budget. City council members also introduce and pass laws, ordinances, and amendments to laws for the city.

Cities and towns often have a mayor or “Executive” who oversees the city government’s daily operations, including departments such as police, fire, education, housing, health, and sanitation.



Ballot Measures

Besides electing officials, your vote can also directly influence policy.

Ballot measures are policies decided directly by voters, rather than the mayor or legislative body! A ballot measure is a law, issue, or question that appears on a local or statewide ballot that people can vote on.

Ballot measures have many names, including: ballot initiatives, popular initiatives, voter initiatives, citizen initiatives, and propositions. All of these names refer to the same

thing, which we call ballot measures. 24 states allow ballot measures. A ballot measure is allowed on the ballot once a petition obtains enough signatures from registered voters.

Ballot measures can impact many policy areas related to people with disabilities such as veteran affairs, healthcare, climate change, transportation, and tax exemptions.



Budgets & Funding

Budget approval processes for state and local government are very similar to each other. The process includes back and forth agreement between agencies, the mayor or governor, and the legislative body.

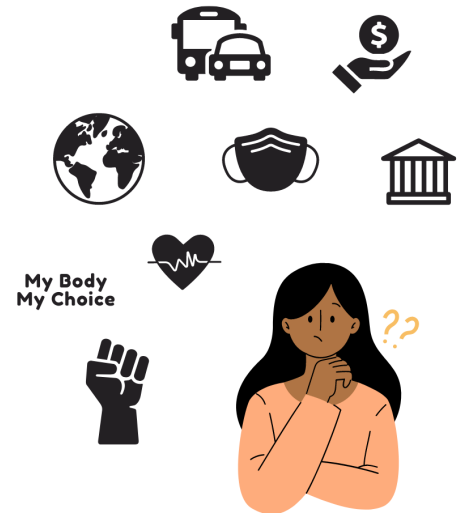
Because you vote into office the people who draft and pass the budget, you have a say in the budget priorities. You can also make your voice heard on the budget through ballot measures. And some governments allow people to participate more directly in budget decisions, for example through community improvement programs and budget-input processes.

The budget can create an impact on your life, so it's important to have elected officials fighting for issues you care about. For example, if public school education is important to you, you can vote for the candidate who speaks about their desire for well-funded education. That person will hopefully use their position to increase the funding for education in the budget. This could create added classes, teachers, or resources for students.

Part 3: Understanding the Issues

As voters decide who and what to vote for in upcoming elections, it can be difficult to know how a candidate’s campaign promises will impact people with disabilities. Most candidate platforms don’t even mention people with disabilities. But policy issues impact our daily lives and for many of us, the decisions that elected officials make have a significant effect on the disability community.

Below, we list some of the most important policy issues impacting people with disabilities. This list is not exhaustive and you may have additional priorities that people with disabilities advocate for.



- [Access to Voting](#)
- [Affordable and Accessible Housing](#)
- [Community Living](#)
- [COVID-19 Response and Recovery](#)
- [Criminal Justice Reform](#)
- [Economic Equity](#)
- [Education](#)
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- [Reproductive Rights and Justice](#)
- [Transportation](#)

In this section, we will talk more about each of these issues. We will also give examples of policies that benefit people with disabilities and policies that can harm people with disabilities. For each topic, we will answer these four questions:

- ❶ How does this issue impact people with disabilities?
- ❷ What policies related to this issue benefit people with disabilities?
- ❸ What policies related to this issue harm people with disabilities?
- ❹ How can I talk about this issue to others?



Access to Voting

How does access to voting impact people with disabilities?

There are over 38 million people with disabilities who are eligible to vote. Unfortunately, Americans with disabilities face many obstacles and barriers to voting. In 2020, voters with disabilities were [nearly twice as likely](#) as nondisabled voters to experience problems with voting. These problems come from inaccessible polling places and voting equipment, difficulty getting to the polling place, lack of access to vote by mail efforts, and election officials and poll workers who haven't been trained about how to provide disability access. Additionally, tens of thousands of seniors, people with mental health conditions, and intellectual disabilities have been disenfranchised in 39 states due to laws that strip some people under guardianship of their right to vote.

What voting rules make voting accessible?

- Expanding access to early voting and same-day voter registration.
- States automatically sending mail-in ballots to all registered voters.
- Allowing voters to receive and fill out ballots electronically before printing them out and sending them in.
- Writing ballots in plain language.
- Making state election websites more accessible.
- Ensuring accessibility at polling locations. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - Accessible doorways, pathways, voting booths, voting machines, and parking
 - Poll workers trained in assisting disabled voters and operating accessible voting machines
 - Ballots in alternative formats, such as large print or braille, as well as key languages spoken in the community

What voting rules make it harder for disabled people to vote?

- Reducing the amount of time voters have to request or mail in ballots.
- Restricting the available drop-off locations.
- Imposing stricter voting requirements. Examples include:

- Requiring a voter’s signature submitted with their mail-in ballot to match a previous signature, which can exclude the ballots of voters with vision, mobility, or other disabilities that impact the consistency of their signature
- Stricter voter-ID requirements, which limits the types of IDs voters can use when casting a ballot
- Requiring a witness or notary for vote-by-mail ballot
- Not allowing curbside or drive-thru voting.
- Restricting who can provide assistance to disabled voters.

How can I talk about this issue?

→ There are over [38 million potential disabled voters](#), but they face many access barriers to voting and vote less often than non-disabled voters.

→ Voters with disabilities, like all voters, should have access to many different ways to vote.



Affordable and Accessible Housing

How does affordable and accessible housing impact disabled people?

Housing can provide safety, independence, and so much more; however, barriers in housing and discrimination lead to a disproportionate number of disabled people experiencing homelessness. Those barriers include the high cost of housing, the lack of accessible housing, and difficulty accessing support programs and services within the community. REV UP supports greater availability of accessible, affordable, integrated, and self-determined housing and rigorous implementation of all Fair Housing laws.

What housing policies are good for disabled people?

- Federal, state, and local investment in accessible and affordable housing. Examples include:
 - Creating more accessible housing
 - Creating nationally-subsidized home modification programs
 - Supporting [Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing](#), which requires developers receiving certain federal funding to promote inclusive communities.
- More protections for people who rent their housing, such as providing low-income renters with free legal representation from a lawyer if they are being evicted. This is sometimes called a tenant's rights to counsel.
- Improving policies against housing discrimination against disabled people because of how they receive income, called "source-of-income" discrimination. Landlords can decide not to rent to someone if they receive government aid as part of their income, which leads to discrimination against people with disabilities who are more likely to receive government assistance.
- Ensuring disabled people can receive the services they need in their communities, rather than in institutions. Example: Home and Community Based Services allow people on Medicaid to receive care at home rather than in institutions.

What housing policies can harm disabled people?

- Limiting the number of accessible units in multi-unit buildings and using zoning laws to limit the production of new and needed multi-unit housing.

- Source-of-income discrimination allows people selling housing or finding tenants to not sell or rent to people depending on how they obtain income, like if they receive income from government programs like social security.

How can I talk about this issue?

- **Less than 5 percent of housing nationwide is accessible for people with moderate mobility difficulties. Less than 1 percent is accessible for wheelchair users. A national affordable housing shortage of more than 7 million units means even fewer housing units are both accessible and affordable.**
- **By creating more and better housing accessible to people with disabilities, guaranteeing a tenant's right to counsel, and prohibiting source-of-income discrimination, we can ensure that people with disabilities find and maintain housing.**



Community Living

How does community living impact people with disabilities?

The Americans with Disabilities Act's (ADA) integration mandate and the Supreme Court's Olmstead decision provide people with disabilities critically important rights— to live, work, and receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate. REV UP fully affirms community living as a right of all people with disabilities, regardless of the type of disability. REV UP supports programs and services that help people live in the community, which prevents them from being forced into institutions, detention centers, jails, prisons, and nursing homes. We believe programs that enable people to move back to the community from institutional settings must be supported, funded, and expanded.

What community living policies are good for disabled people?

- Access to long-term supports and services provided in community rather than in institutions. Examples include:
 - Increasing funding for Home and Community Based Services
 - Closing institutional settings
 - Reducing or eliminating the waiting list for Medicaid waivers
 - Better wages and benefits for direct support workers
- More services in the community. Examples include: access to education, transition services to employment after school, community activities to make new social connections and learn new skills, supported employment opportunities, and reliable and accessible public transportation.
- Removing barriers to accessing and using assistive technology and devices, including mobility devices, screen readers, alternative communication devices, hearing aids, and more.

What policies can reduce community living opportunities for disabled people?

- More funding meant to house people with disabilities and seniors in assisted living facilities, nursing homes, group homes and other group living institutions, rather than funding to help provide access to needed services in their community.
- Expanded use of involuntary treatment. For example: assisted outpatient treatment laws mean if you refuse to follow court orders you can be institutionalized.

How can I talk about this issue?

- We know that 89 percent of disabled people would prefer to live in their communities instead of in an institutional setting.
- Living in the community allows people with disabilities to gain more independence, have more access to activities, services, and community, and have better overall health outcomes.



COVID-19 Response and Recovery

How does COVID-19 impact people with disabilities?

While COVID-19 has impacted the lives of every American, the pandemic has worsened and added to existing issues faced by people with disabilities, and especially disabled people of color. During the COVID-19 pandemic, disabled people have lost jobs, struggled financially, and gotten sick and died at much higher rates compared to the rest of the population. As the pandemic continues and changes, our governments' and communities' responses to COVID-19 must consider how the pandemic has affected the disability community.

What COVID-19 policies are good for disabled people?

- Mask and vaccination requirements for community gatherings, employment, education, institutional and healthcare settings.
- Continued remote work, education, and telehealth flexibilities coupled with efforts to provide greater access to broadband and improvements in digital accessibility.
- Making it easier for disabled people to transition out of institutionalized settings, where they are more likely to get COVID-19.
- Creating accessible communication in public health and emergency management.
- Expanding mental health services.
- Funding for schools to have better preventative care to help reduce COVID-19 in classrooms, like better air filtration systems to protect disabled students and staff.
- More funds for disabled students to allow them to recover and regain skills after the pandemic's learning loss.

What COVID-19 policies harm disabled people?

- Confusing and constantly changing rules around mask wearing and vaccines.
- Laws and regulations that prevent schools or workplaces from requiring masks.
- Lack of attention for people with disabilities during the pandemic and a lack of accessible and accurate data regarding the presence of COVID-19 in communities and congregate settings.

- Crisis standards of care that discriminate against people with disabilities.
- Lack of support for people with Long COVID to receive accommodations and public benefits.

How can I talk about this issue

- **The COVID-19 pandemic has increased the number of people with disabilities and has had a disproportionate impact on the disability community.** Long-term effects from COVID-19 infections, such as Long COVID, have created a large increase of new people with disabilities.
- **The COVID-19 pandemic has also further shown the way that our systems discriminate against the disabled community:** disabled students were deprioritized; as were disabled people seeking medical care and those in congregate settings.
- **We need to keep the public health measures and remote flexibilities established during the COVID-19 pandemic in place for education, employment, healthcare, and voting in order to continue protecting disabled people from getting COVID-19.**



Criminal Justice Reform

Incarcerated people are three to four times [more likely](#) than the general population to report having at least one disability. Furthermore, there are significant racial disparities in incarceration rates, with Black people incarcerated at nearly [five times](#) the rate of white people in state prisons. REV UP supports a transformation of the U.S. criminal legal system in ways such as stopping police discrimination, increasing accommodations in the court system, and preventing jails from functioning as mental health institutions.

What criminal justice reform policies are good for disabled people?

- Promote alternatives for policing and incarceration, which is particularly important when responding to mental health crises. This includes reducing the use of police in schools.
- Reform the court system. Examples include: eliminating cash bail and providing free communication aids.
- Ensuring access to accommodations for disabled people when they must interact with the criminal legal system, and ensuring the rights of people with disabilities in prisons and jails are respected.
- Holding police officers accountable if they break the law by prosecuting them.

What criminal justice policies can harm disabled people?

- Increasing police presence in schools and in our communities, especially when police receive inadequate training for interacting with people with disabilities and perceive the presence of disability as inherently criminal.
- Increasingly arming police and not holding police accountable for ableism, racism, violation of constitutional rights, violent behavior, murder, and other criminal conduct that often disproportionately impacts disabled people of color.
- Discrimination and denial of healthcare. For example, Deaf people and people with communication disabilities are put in solitary confinement “for their own protection” rather than providing just accommodation. Disabled people are also routinely denied their medications and prosthetics while incarcerated.
- Taking away the civil rights of people who have been to jail or prison. For example, taking away the voting rights of people when they are in jail or prison and even after they re-enter society.

How can I talk about this issue?

- In the past, our country forced people with disabilities into institutions, separate from society. Now, fewer people with disabilities have to live in nursing homes, group homes, or other institutions. **Our criminal legal system puts more people with disabilities in jails and prisons. Jails and prisons are institutions that isolate disabled people and make it harder for them to access necessary health care.**
- **While incarcerated, people with disabilities are especially vulnerable to violence and excessive discipline.**
- **Justice for our communities means accountability for police's actions, reducing the disparity of disabled, Black, and Brown people in prisons and jails, and ensuring accommodations and rights for people with disabilities involved in the criminal legal system.**



Economic Equity

How does economic equity impact people with disabilities?

People with disabilities experience one of the [highest rates of unemployment](#) of any marginalized group, and these rates are highest for multiply-marginalized people with disabilities. The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is often more than double the unemployment rate of people without disabilities. REV UP advocates for a range of economic equity issues including livable wages, equal access to jobs, pay equity, an updated income support system, and more.

What economic equity policies are good for disabled people?

- Increasing the accessibility to public benefits programs through efforts like expanding Medicaid.
- Increasing the income and asset limits for programs like Supplemental Security Income that depend on a recipient's income level, and reducing the wait times to receive government assistance.
- Increasing investments in Home and Community Based Services to reduce waiting lists and improve wages and employment protections for direct support workers.
- Eliminating the subminimum wage that some workplaces are allowed to pay workers with disabilities. Subminimum wages can be as low as just a few dollars an hour.
- Raising the federal minimum wage to reflect increases in inflation and the rising cost of living.

What economic policies can hurt disabled people?

- Continuing to have subminimum wages for people with disabilities, which can be as low as a few dollars an hour.
- Barriers for disabled people to get access to government assistance and healthcare through low income limits, complicated applications and qualifications, and long wait times to receive benefits.

How can I talk about this issue?

→ Discrimination in employment, restrictive government assistance programs, high health care and housing costs, and more, make it harder for disabled people to be financially secure.

→ We can reduce poverty in the disability community by ensuring that disabled people are paid equitably, have easier access to government assistance that reflects the increased cost of living, and have accessible and affordable health care.



Education

How does education impact people with disabilities?

Education is the cornerstone of realizing the ADA's goals of full participation, independent living, economic self-sufficiency, and equal opportunity. All students have the right to a free, safe, and supportive public education, including students with disabilities. REV UP advocates for students with disabilities to receive the same opportunities to succeed alongside their non-disabled peers. This means providing support such as assistive technology and other important services, like mental health counseling, in schools. It also means reducing the isolation, segregation, policing, and criminalization of students with disabilities.

What education policies are good for disabled people?

- Including students with disabilities in the same classrooms as their non-disabled peers.
- Training educators in disability-specific issue areas.
- Hiring more support staff, including more school counselors.
- Teaching disability history and the histories of other marginalized communities.
- Meeting the individual needs of students' 504 plans and individualized education programs; increasing physical accessibility and Rehabilitation Act and ADA compliance within school facilities.
- Fully funding and enforcing the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#).
- Ensuring that disabled students can go to school without the threat of inhumane seclusion and restraint tactics.
- Connecting disabled students with employment training opportunities and other supports to ensure they have a smooth transition from school to career.

What education policies can hurt disabled people?

- Placing students with disabilities in separate classrooms or unnecessarily focusing on disabled students.

- Having police and school resources officers in schools leads to disproportionate targeting of disabled youth, especially disabled youth of color.
- Disciplinary practices such as corporal punishment, seclusion, and restraint harm and traumatize disabled, Black, and Brown students.
- A lack of funding for school support staff, student assessment, and accommodations leads to segregation of disabled students and lower education outcomes.

How can I talk about this issue?

- **The U.S. high school graduation rate in the 2018-2019 school year was [68.2 percent](#) for students with disabilities compared to 85.6 percent for students without disabilities.**
- **The U.S. needs to invest more resources so all students, including students with disabilities, have the supports they need to meaningfully participate in learning with their peers.**

- **Our school systems need appropriate policies, resources, and personnel so all students can benefit from inclusive education.** Inclusive education enables students with and without disabilities to develop a sense of belonging and become better prepared for life in the community both as children and adults. Inclusive education, with the right type and amount of support, provides better opportunities for learning.



Emergency Preparedness and Climate Change

How does emergency preparedness and climate change impact people with disabilities?

Climate change is intensifying the frequency and duration of disasters around the world, including in the U.S. People with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by disasters, during which they are [two to four times](#) more likely to die or be injured. Yet, the disability community is often excluded from disaster preparedness, planning, response, and recovery. REV UP is committed to amplifying the need for emergency preparedness resources for people with disabilities. This includes enforcing the equal access requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

What emergency preparedness and climate change policies benefit disabled people?

- More investment in accessible communication of disaster relief strategies when a disaster occurs. Examples include: on-screen interpreters, closed captions during briefings and in shelters, and audio descriptions.
- More planning and preparation before a disaster, including training rescue groups about accessible rescue strategies and providing disaster response education for caregivers and non-disabled household members.
- Equitable resource distribution plans during recovery.
- Development of infrastructure standards that encourage resiliency and accessibility.

What policies can harm disabled people in this area?

- Not investing in emergency preparedness puts the disabled community especially at risk. Disabled people are most likely to need community aid in a disaster.
- Over-reliance on institutional and congregate settings as sheltering and short-term housing options for people with disabilities and older adults.

How can I talk about this issue?

- Disabled people are more likely to be physically and financially impacted by disasters.
- Often, governments don't consider the specific needs of people with disabilities when crafting and executing their emergency relief plans.
- We need to include and consider disabled people when we plan for emergencies as the climate crisis accelerates the frequency of emergency events.



Equitable and Accessible Technology

How does technology impact people with disabilities?

Technology has become a part of nearly every part of life, from hiring and transportation to our social lives and healthcare systems. REV UP supports programs and regulations that ensure people with disabilities have equal access to broadband internet and assistive technologies that provide access to the digital world.

REV UP also values the regulation of emerging machine learning technologies to prevent algorithmic bias and other forms of discrimination against people with disabilities, people of color, and other marginalized communities.

What equitable and accessible technology policies are good for disabled people?

- More funding for broadband internet projects, especially for low-income individuals and people living on tribal land.
- Increased data privacy protections and encouraging good data management practices, including reducing the amount of personal data that is collected and stored.
- Clear accessibility guidance for websites and apps.
- Increased enforcement of civil rights laws with respect to algorithmic bias.

What technology policies can harm disabled people?

- Lack of oversight for machine learning and other autonomous tools, which has led to discrimination against people with disabilities in hiring, housing, and banking.
- The costs of adaptive equipment and assistive technology are very high, and it is extremely difficult to get insurance coverage for devices that people need to survive and thrive.
- Lack of standards requiring all websites, mobile applications and other technologies to be accessible.

How can I talk about this issue?

- Technology has provided freedom for people with disabilities. **But people with disabilities are less likely to have access to the internet or own digital devices, and experience barriers through the creation of inaccessible tech.**
- **Through further equitable investment and deployment, we can use technology to further benefit people with disabilities.**



Healthcare

How does healthcare impact people with disabilities?

People with disabilities rely on both public insurance (like Medicaid, Children’s Health Insurance Program, and Medicare) and private insurance options to obtain coverage to meet their health care needs.

Access to affordable comprehensive health care coverage is essential for people with disabilities to live independently. Unfortunately, many people with disabilities continue to lack access to the services and support they need. In addition, despite existing legal protections, people with disabilities face discrimination in both the financing and provision of health care services. REV UP advocates that people with disabilities, and all Americans, need to access affordable comprehensive health care coverage.

What healthcare policies are good for disabled people?

- More disability awareness and training within the medical field. Medical professionals such as doctors and nurses should receive more training for how to treat and react to disabled people.
- Decrease cost and increase ease of using healthcare. Examples include: a public healthcare option; making the system more understandable and less complicated.
- Acknowledging people with disabilities often require more resources to get adequate health care, and adjusting health care payment systems to ensure that medical professionals will have and can spend those resources on meeting the needs of people with disabilities.

What are some healthcare policies that can harm disabled people?

- Forcing patients with disabilities within the state to receive care. This prevents recipients from receiving better care for their specific condition that may be available in other states.
- Income ceilings that prevent recipients from earning too high a wage or else risk losing healthcare options.
- Policies that discriminate against the disability community and deny people with disabilities access to care based on assumptions about disabled people’s quality of life.
- Inaccessible equipment that prevents people with disabilities from being diagnosed and treated for conditions like cancer.

How can I talk about this issue?

- People with disabilities report cases of being treated badly because doctors and nurses do not know how to treat them with respect and provide proper care.
- People with disabilities are more likely to face unexpected medical expenses that worsen their economic security.
- Specialized training for medical professionals and a public healthcare option can work towards solving these problems.
- Hospitals must make sure they do not use crisis standards of care that discriminate against people with disabilities in accessing life saving care.
- Hospitals and public health clinics need to have accessible exam tables, scales, and other equipment.



Income Support

How do income support programs impact people with disabilities?

Barriers to work and education, high healthcare costs, discriminatory subminimum wages, and many more factors make it hard for disabled people to earn enough to cover expenses. Income support programs, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), that supplement income are vital to ensuring the survival of many people with disabilities. But these programs can be difficult to apply for, can take years to qualify for, and include asset limits and other restrictions that make it difficult or impossible for people with disabilities to become employed and plan for their futures. REV UP believes that disabled people should have access to necessary income support that reflects cost of living without burdensome applications, waiting periods, and asset limits that force people into poverty.

What income support policies are good for disabled people?

- Policies that make income support programs more responsive to the needs of disabled people. Examples include:
 - Making the benefits application process more accessible and reducing wait times
 - Expanding [ABLE account](#) eligibility to people who became disabled after the age of 26 to allow more people to save
- Allowing immigrants and people living in U.S. territories to receive income support.
- Increasing the basic benefit amount and eliminating the asset limit for recipients of income support.

What income support policies harm disabled people?

- Policies that make programs difficult to access for those it is meant for. Examples include:
 - Extremely long wait times
 - Burdensome requirements to qualify for benefits
- Penalizing people who receive income support benefits for getting married, working, and trying to save money.

- Income and asset limits for income support programs that are so low they force people with disabilities, [especially disabled people of color](#) (who make up the majority of beneficiaries), into poverty to keep their benefits.

How can I talk about this issue?

- Supplemental Security Income's (SSI) asset limits, and benefits, have barely changed since the program was signed into law fifty years ago. Those who qualify for SSI are given benefits that equal [75% the federal poverty level](#), and can't get other jobs because then they wouldn't qualify for the program.
- Treating disabled people with dignity means reforming income support programs to ensure disabled people get access to needed government assistance.



Racial Justice & Civil Rights

How does racial justice impact people with disabilities?

REV UP is committed to an intersectional and racial justice-minded approach to disability rights, which are civil rights. This means we fight for the inclusion of people of color, women and non-binary people, immigrants, and people who identify as LGBTQIA2S+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, two-spirit) in all REV UP core campaign areas. REV UP supports education, programs, and policies that prevent and address discrimination against the communities mentioned above. The REV UP network advocates for the rights of all people, and especially those that are multiply-marginalized, meaning that they are a part of more than one community facing discrimination and exclusion. REV UP also aims to protect and advance Civil Rights legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Voting Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and more. Similar to how we began this guide, in addition to being a disability issue, every issue is a racial justice and civil rights issue.

What racial justice policies are good for disabled people of color?

- Reverse current policies that disproportionately affect Black, indigenous, and people of color who are disabled. Examples of these reversed policies include:
 - Allowing Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients to enroll in health insurance through the Affordable Care Act, the Child Health Insurance Program, and Medicaid
 - Local governments restructuring budgets to increase historically underfunded community supports, including housing, transportation, mental health and other disability services to reduce the communities' reliance on police when responding to people labeled as being in a "mental health crisis"
 - Permanently and fully funding the Special Diabetes Program for Indians, as Native Americans are approximately two times more likely to have and die from diabetes
- Policies that provide opportunities for disabled people of color and that educate the public about race in America. Examples include:
 - School curriculums that teach the histories of marginalized communities and individuals, like Harriet Tubman, Frida Kahlo, and Geraldine Lawhorn, all disabled women of color who have made significant positive change

- Improved data collection that examines experiences at the intersection of gender identity, race, sexual orientation, and disability

What are some policies that can harm disabled people of color?

- Increased funding and presence of police in schools.
- Efforts to make education curriculum less inclusive and less reflective of the diversity of the U.S.
- A lack of language access and language diversity in community outreach and government programs.

How can I talk about this issue?

→ When people hold more than one marginal identity, including being a person of color, non-male, LGBTQIA2S+ , and disabled, [they are more likely than white disabled people](#) to be in poverty, face workplace harassment or discrimination, go hungry, and get paid less.

→ We need policies that prioritize disabled people of color and other multiply-marginalized communities. We also need policies that both acknowledge and address the ways that racism is a part of our laws, our society, and our own minds.



Reproductive Rights and Justice

How do reproductive rights and justice impact disabled people?

Full participation in society is contingent upon the freedom to make one's own decisions and access to all forms of health care, including reproductive health care. People with disabilities, like all Americans, deserve unrestricted access to a comprehensive range of reproductive health care options, ranging from birth control and abortion access, to prenatal care and delivery. We also know that abortion politics have long presented complications unique to the disability community. Selective abortion is deeply rooted in societal ableism and eugenics. AAPD works to rid our nation of such ableism every day, and the complexities of our work teach us that restricting access to abortion is not the answer.

What policies are good for disabled people in this area?

- More accessible abortions services, reproductive healthcare care, and sexual education.
- Ensuring those on Medicare and Medicaid have abortion coverage.
- Keeping abortion legal and unrestricted.

What policies can hurt disabled people in this area?

- Abortion bans and any kind of restrictions.
- Having different abortion laws in different states creates barriers to healthcare, confusion, and fear around abortion and other reproductive healthcare.

How can I talk about this issue?

→ Disabled people need access to abortions. But many health clinics are even designed without consideration of the needs of disabled people so disabled people can't access the space itself.

→ Reproductive Justice requires consideration of the needs of disabled people.



Transportation

How does transportation impact people with disabilities?

Access to affordable and reliable transportation allows people with disabilities important opportunities to go to school, work, take care of their health, live where they desire, and participate in all aspects of community life.

Because our nation's investments in transportation infrastructure have disproportionately favored vehicles and highways, those who cannot afford vehicles or do not drive often lack viable transportation options. People with disabilities and older adults are less likely to have a valid driver's license and are more likely to need transit. REV UP supports people with disabilities' right to access mass transportation facilities and services, including across rural communities. REV UP also supports accessible innovations in technology to create accessible autonomous vehicles.

What transportation policies are good for disabled people?

- Heavy investment in accessible and more frequent public transportation.
- More enforcement of existing accessibility laws.
- Adding and implementing community input in local, state, and federal transportation capital plans and infrastructure investment.
- Making paratransit services more on-demand.
- Greater investment in making sidewalks accessible.

What transportation policies can harm disabled people?

- Transportation infrastructure plans without accessibility in mind.
- Lack of accountability for rideshare companies and other new forms of transit that consistently violate accessibility requirements.
- Persistent breakage and damage of wheelchairs and other medical and mobility equipment when people with disabilities travel by plane.

How can I talk about this issue?

- Lack of accessible transportation means less independence, social connection, community engagement, employment opportunities, and economic security.
- Accessible, reliable public transportation allows for many people, including people with

disabilities and low income individuals, to fully participate in life, the community, and get access to healthcare and other necessary services.

- Public transit also reduces greenhouse gas emissions, getting us closer to climate goals.

Part 4: More Tools on Disability Issues

- [AAPD's Advocacy and Policy Positions](#)
- [Self-Advocacy Resources from the Autistic Self Advocacy Network](#)
- [REV UP Candidate Survey Example](#)
- [Find Out Who and What Will Be on Your Ballot](#)
- [Find Out How To Vote In Your State](#)

About AAPD and REV UP

AAPD is a convener, connector, and catalyst for change, increasing the political and economic power of people with disabilities. As one of the leading national cross-disability civil rights organizations, AAPD advocates for the full recognition of rights for the over 60 million Americans with disabilities. To learn more about AAPD, visit www.aapd.com.

AAPD's REV UP Campaign is a national nonpartisan campaign building the power of the disability vote. REV UP is made up of coalitions and partner organizations working to make sure disabled voters are registered and ready to vote and have access to the ballot. Learn more about REV UP at www.aapd.com/revup.

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This guide does not try to represent the views of every disabled voter, as we are a diverse voting bloc. This guide provides the views of AAPD and REV UP on key issues impacting disabled voters in upcoming elections.



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