

2020 Congressional Questionnaire for Developmental Disabilities

Name: Pramila Jayapal

District: WA-07

Position: U.S. House of Representatives

1. If you have a personal connection or professional experience with someone who has a developmental disability, would you describe its impact on you?

Since joining Congress nearly four years ago, I have made it a priority to broaden constituent services offered by my office. My staff and I have worked with many individuals and families who need help navigating our complex federal systems, including the Federal Disabilities Benefit.

2. What are your top three legislative priorities and how would you help people with developmental disabilities in them?

1. Health care is a human right and we must make it more affordable and accessible for every American. Last year, I introduced the most comprehensive Medicare for All bill ever in the House. I believe it's time for a health care system that is focused on patients, not profits; a system that recognizes health care is a right, not a privilege for the wealthy. We must ensure that everyone in our country has comprehensive, quality health care no matter their income, race, gender or zip code. With my plan, seniors and people with disabilities would no longer need supplemental insurance or have to meet an income requirement to cover aspects of their health care; including long-term care, home, and community-based services.
2. Ensuring equality and dignity for every single person. Our country stands at a crossroads, with the Trump administration encouraging, inciting, and promoting hate, racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, and xenophobia. I will continue my 25-year track record of fighting for equality at every level, including protecting and strengthening the Americans with Disabilities Act. I will ensure that we bring the most marginalized voices to the table and stand up for those who are being left behind, and I will help to lead the fight for respect, dignity, and human rights for all.
3. Fighting for workers and economic equality. Those who are differently abled deserve every opportunity to succeed and contribute to our economy. I will continue to prioritize increasing the federal minimum wage; supporting unions and strengthening labor protections, including ADA; and fighting for federal child care, paid safe & sick leave, and gender pay equity.

3. With the current economic crisis, how would you protect services that people with I/DD and their families need?

Millions of Americans have lost their jobs since March and for many, that also means they lost their health insurance. I have helped craft and introduce three bills that will allow Americans access to quality, affordable healthcare throughout this crisis.

I worked with Rep. Joe Kennedy to introduce the Medicare Crisis Program Act, which would enroll all of the recently unemployed since the pandemic in Medicare.

I worked closely with Senator Bernie Sanders to introduce the Health Care Emergency Guarantee Act, which would empower Medicare to cover every uninsured U.S. resident and would cover co-pays and deductibles for everyone with private or public health insurance.

I have also introduced the Paycheck Recovery Act, which would end mass unemployment, put workers back on their paychecks and health care and keep businesses from closing permanently while ensuring workers aren't forced to return to work before it is safe to do so.

4. Is there other information you'd like constituents with developmental disabilities and their family and friends to know?

I strongly believe that we are all better off when we are all better off, and we need to make sure our economy and our country includes and works for everyone.

5. Will you advocate to keep the items listed below for people with DD in HR 6800 as passed the House?

HR 6800 (HEROES Act - Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act) contains

- expanding home and community-based services;
- paid time off for family caregivers, including grandparents and siblings of people with disabilities;
- ensuring stability of SNAP for food assistance and Supplemental Security Income;
- fund direct support professionals to care for adult loved ones with disabilities at home and;
- eliminating cost sharing for Medicaid beneficiaries (learn more by [clicking here](#)).

I will always advocate for expanding home and community-based services, paid time off for caregivers, stabilizing and increasing food assistance, funding direct support professionals to care for adult loved ones, and eliminating the burden of medical costs for our most vulnerable families.

However, I voted no on the Heroes Act because this legislation does not match the true scale of this devastating crisis. It does not keep workers in their jobs nor does it guarantee affordable and accessible health care for everyone.

I believe we can and must put forward a legislative package that meets the real needs of my constituents and people across the country who are desperate for Congress to have their backs, to help them get money back in their pockets and give them some certainty about being able to pay their bills and put food on the table. A package that ensures everyone has health care, that helps businesses to survive this crisis and that protects the rights of workers to get the pensions they already earned and were counting on.

6. Do you support HR 2417 (HEADs UP Act), HR 4882 (Community Safety Act of 2019) and HR 1529 (MAPSA Act - Marriage Access for People with Special Abilities Act)? If not, why?

While I did not co-sponsor these specific bills, I strongly believe that we must improve emergency responses for people with mental illness and intellectual and developmental disabilities and increase mental health awareness training. I will also fight to ensure that SSI benefits for an individual with an intellectual or developmental disability will not be affected by marital status. And, I will always support expanding and improving health care services for all communities. My Medicare for All Bill will completely redefine what health care in America looks like and specifically increases access and funding for seniors, people with disabilities, and those who require mental health services.