



Many Voices / One Vision



2026 Congressional Candidate Survey

Questions for Congressional Candidates – The Arc of Washington
The Community Advocacy Coalition for Developmental Disabilities

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1. Do you have a personal connection or professional experience with someone who has an intellectual/developmental disability? (I/DD) If yes, would you describe its impact on you and your candidacy? If not, what have you learned about people with intellectual or developmental disabilities and how has it impacted your candidacy?

Yes. My uncle Billy has cerebral palsy. I grew up around him and his wife Celeste, who is also disabled, my entire life. Uncle Billy wore braces to walk until he was about 18. To me they were never “disabled” – they were just Uncle Billy and Aunt Celeste: functional, independent, and part of the family. It wasn’t until later that someone had to explain to me that they were considered disabled. At first that label seemed silly and almost offensive to me because I had only ever seen their strength and capability. That experience had a huge impact on my candidacy. It taught me early that people with disabilities are not defined by their diagnosis – they are

defined by what they can do when given the chance. It drives me to fight against systems that warehouse people or create dependency instead of opportunity. It's why I'm running on real solutions: medical freedom, workforce training through the Dogcon Youth Rehabilitation & Workforce Campus, and economic policies that let families thrive instead of just survive.

2. What policies and systems are you aware of that impact the lives of people with IDD and their families? If elected, what responsibility would you have to change those policies or systems?

Key systems include Medicaid (especially Home and Community-Based Services – HCBS), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and housing/transportation supports. Too often these programs create waiting lists, asset penalties that punish marriage and saving, and over-reliance on institutional or family-only care. As your Congressman, my responsibility is clear: provide aggressive federal oversight, redirect existing dollars away from middlemen and waste toward efficient, community-based solutions, and give states and families more flexibility. I will fight to cut red tape, expand real choice, and make sure tax dollars actually reach the people who need them.

3. If elected, what are your top three priorities, and how would people with IDD and their families benefit from each priority?

My top three priorities are: Medical Freedom and Healthcare Reform – I will immediately introduce the Medical Cannabis Equity and Access Act to mandate Medicaid and insurance coverage for medical cannabis and recognize family caregivers and home co-ops as qualified providers. Families caring for loved ones with IDD will gain affordable, effective tools for pain, seizures, anxiety, and behavioral support without fighting insurance gatekeepers.

Youth Rehabilitation & Workforce Opportunity – Through the Dogcon Youth Rehabilitation & Workforce Campus Act, I will redirect federal juvenile justice dollars into vocational training academies (welding, automotive, trades) with integrated mental health support. This creates real pathways out of

dependency for young people with developmental challenges and gives families hope and long-term stability.

Economic Security for Working Families — By slashing wasteful spending and inflation-driving policies, we lower the cost of living so families can afford housing, transportation, and respite care without choosing between groceries and medicine. Stronger families mean better outcomes for their loved ones with IDD.

4. When you have questions about how to best support people with IDD and their families, what or who are your trusted resources?

I go straight to the experts: the families and self-advocates living it every day in Grays Harbor, Mason, Thurston, and Pierce counties. I also listen to frontline service providers, vocational rehabilitation specialists, and local caregivers. My door will always be open to The Arc of Washington State, the Community Advocacy Coalition, and any group that puts results over politics. Real solutions come from the ground up — not from D.C. bureaucrats.

5. Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) are Medicaid services that are essential for individuals with IDD. They provide support for daily living (such as bathing, dressing, eating, and managing medication), having a job, accessing the community, and giving families a break from providing 24/7 care. Currently HCBS services are optional but nursing home services are an entitlement. The average US cost per year for a nursing home is \$111,000, compared to \$17,000 to provide in-home supports. Currently, HCBS services are under threat because of the HRI cuts to Medicaid. Many states have years-long waiting lists for HCBS services. Do you support strengthening Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) and making them an entitlement? Why or why not?

Yes, I support strengthening HCBS and making them an entitlement. It is common sense and fiscally responsible. Keeping people in their homes and communities costs roughly \$17,000 per year versus \$111,000 for a nursing home. HCBS empowers families, reduces isolation, and saves taxpayers money. I will fight to protect and expand these services while cutting the waste and bureaucracy that currently creates years-long waiting lists.

Families should never have to choose between 24/7 caregiving and bankruptcy.

6. People with IDD frequently rely on The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program as their basic source of income. SSI has not been updated since 1984. Currently, individuals on SSI will lose their benefits if they have assets of more than \$2000 (Excluding their home and care) and married couples can only have \$3000. This creates a disincentive for individuals with IDD to marry. Do you support raising the asset limit, and eliminating the "marriage penalty" for recipients of SSI? Why or why not?

Yes – 100%. The current \$2,000 individual / \$3,000 couple asset limit hasn't been updated since 1984. It punishes saving, discourages marriage, and traps people in poverty. We should raise the limits significantly and eliminate the marriage penalty so individuals with IDD can build a future, marry if they choose, and live with dignity instead of being penalized for wanting a normal life. This is basic fairness.

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

I see you. I see the exhaustion, the love, and the daily fight. As your Congressman, I won't offer more empty promises or bigger government – I will deliver real results: better healthcare access, meaningful job training pathways, stronger family supports, and an end to the bureaucratic barriers that hold people back. Together we will build a Washington where every person, regardless of ability, has the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in their own community. I will Try To get a video sent over To Cathy as soon as possible.