

Duckworth Urges Colleagues To Include President Biden's Request For A \$400 Billion Home And Community-based Services (hcbs) Investment In 2022 Budget

August 10 2021 11:03 AM



WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) today urged U.S. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), U.S. Senate Committee on Budget Chair Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and U.S. Senate Committee on Finance Chair Ron Wyden (D-OR) to include President Biden’s request for a \$400 billion investment over 10 years for Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services in the reconciliation instructions in the fiscal year 2022 budget resolution.

This letter is also signed by U.S. Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Raphael Warnock (D-GA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT).

“As a strong supporter of President Biden’s, I urge the Senate Committees on the Budget and Finance to heed President Biden’s request by including \$400 billion over 10 years for Medicaid HCBS expansion in the final package of legislation that will be developed pursuant to the reconciliation instructions accompanying the forthcoming fiscal year 2022 budget resolution,” the Senators wrote. “Ten years of funding will provide States with the certainty they require to commit to expanding Medicaid HCBS, while \$400 billion will make sure Medicaid HCBS expansion delivers high-quality services and raise wages and benefits for home health workers.”

Duckworth has been a strong advocate Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). In March, Duckworth and Casey successfully [included](#) \$12 billion in dedicated emergency funding for State Medicaid HCBS in the American Rescue Plan that passed the Senate. In December of last year, Duckworth [helped Casey introduce](#) the *HCBS Relief Act*, legislation that would provide increased funding for home and community-based services by providing dedicated Medicaid funds for HCBS—which would reduce the need for people with disabilities and older adults to move into congregate settings. Duckworth also [led](#) a letter last month with Senators Gillibrand (D-NY) and Casey (D-PA), calling for greater investment in the care economy, including HCBS, paid family leave and child care.

Full text of the letter is available [here](#) and below.

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Chairman Sanders and Chairman Wyden:

When running for President, then-candidate Joe Biden unveiled a comprehensive plan to clear the Medicaid home and community-based services (HCBS) waiting list over the next decade. This list has grown to exceed more than 800,000 Americans, who are eligible for, but unable to access, HCBS under Medicaid because States lack resources to provide robust home and community care under the current Medicaid system. Upon entering office, President Biden followed through on his commitment by unveiling a bold American Jobs Plan (AJP) that contained a flagship proposal calling on Congress “...to put \$400 billion toward expanding access to quality, affordable home- or community-based care for aging relatives and people with disabilities.”

President Biden’s proposed Medicaid HCBS expansion would create good, middle-class, caregiving jobs with benefits and the free and fair choice to join a union – while strengthening compensation and worker rights for the existing home and community-based care workforce, which is primarily comprised of women of color. At a July 26,

2021 celebration of the 31st Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, President Biden reiterated his call for Congress to provide \$400 billion to expand Medicaid HCBS and expressed his strong support for the Better Care Better Jobs Act, which would implement the vision contained in the AJP proposal.

As a strong supporter of President Biden's AJP, I urge the Senate Committees on the Budget and Finance to heed President Biden's request by including \$400 billion over 10 years for Medicaid HCBS expansion in the final package of legislation that will be developed pursuant to the reconciliation instructions accompanying the forthcoming fiscal year 2022 budget resolution. Ten years of funding will provide States with the certainty they require to commit to expanding Medicaid HCBS, while \$400 billion will make sure Medicaid HCBS expansion delivers high-quality services and raise wages and benefits for home health workers.

President Biden's call to transform our Nation's home and community-based care economy is supported by the disability, labor and aging communities – and this vital coalition is counting on Senate Democrats to transform the President's promise into a reality nationwide. We have a historic opportunity to work with the Biden administration to make sure that our aging loved ones and Americans with disabilities are empowered to make the choice of receiving high quality care services through Medicaid in the comfort of their home, in their local communities or from family members if that is how they wish to thrive.

Sincerely,