



ACCSES Public Policy Priorities for 2010

Consistent with our Mission, Vision, and Values, ACCSES will direct its advocacy activities toward specific goals for each of our priority areas. While we are ready to react to our federal government's legislative and regulatory proposals, our posture is to be proactive and collaborative in working with government and other advocacy and service organizations on our priority issues.

In these difficult financial times, we are particularly cognizant of the disproportionate and adverse impact the economy has on people with disabilities in terms of their employment, health and independence and the stress placed on our valued Members to deliver necessary services and supports.

I. Employment

A. Principles

- Meaningful employment opportunities shall be available for all people with disabilities who desire to work.
- Public policy shall aggressively encourage employers to hire and accommodate people with disabilities in a variety of work settings.
- Government shall ensure that a full continuum of employment opportunities are available for persons with disabilities. The presumed option shall be competitive integrated employment. The full continuum shall also include center-based employment. Individuals shall remain able to exercise their informed choice of the option that is consistent with their strengths, interests, abilities, and capabilities. No options should be removed from the continuum without meaningful and appropriate alternatives.
- Public policy shall facilitate appropriate training and accommodations for competitive employment.

B. Agenda

- **On the WIA/Rehab Act, ACCSES shall:**
 - Work to encourage the reauthorization of the Rehab Act during this Congress;
 - Work with Congress to ensure dedicated and adequate funding streams in all employment programs and continued separation between WIA and Rehab Act programs;
 - Promote physical and programmatic accessibility to WIA/Rehab Act programs; and
 - Advocate for increased funding and improvements to employment transitional services in all programs.

- **On the AbilityOne Program, ACCSES shall:**
 - Champion the original legislative intent of the JWOD Act to assist people with severe disabilities for whom AbilityOne represents the preferred employment choice;
 - Advocate for the inclusion in the Federal Acquisition Regulations the “poaching agreement” regarding Randolph Sheppard and Ability One Providers;
 - Work to protect AbilityOne contracts on military bases for services (such as dining hall, janitorial and landscaping) by opposing encroachment by others;
 - Promote the right of nonprofits participating in the AbilityOne program to independently govern themselves;
 - Actively participate as members of the QWE initiative steering group to ensure that the Initiative encourages and facilitates the adoption of best practices consistent with ACCSES’ stated positions; and
 - Promote the JWOD Modernization bill to the extent that the legislation is consistent with ACCSES positions.
- **ACCSES shall support federal procurement and other incentives that increase meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities.**
- **ACCSES shall monitor the Ticket to Work Advisory Panel Recommendations and respond, as appropriate.**
- **ACCSES shall also monitor issues that impact its members in terms of their businesses and organizations including:**
 - **FICA taxes; and**
 - **Minimum wage.**
- **ACCSES strongly favors the continuation of the 14(c) program and the enforcement of regulations preventing misuse of the program.**
 - ACCSES shall support fair wages for workers with disabilities and will work with other organizations to insure full compliance with the law.
 - ACCSES shall monitor enforcement of the laws by the U.S. Department of Labor.
 - ACCSES shall monitor and respond to Congressional action on wage and hour laws and enforcement as appropriate.
- **ACCSES will monitor, influence and respond to Congressional initiatives to create a new direction for national employment strategy for individuals with disabilities.**

II. Health Care

A. Principles

- Health care reform shall address the unique and general needs of all citizens with disabilities, and should afford commensurate health care for people with and without disabilities.
- Health care shall include the full array of services necessary to maintain function and independent living, not simply serve acute health care needs.
- The bias in health care shall be toward home and community based care with access to service delivery programs rather than institutional care.
- Expanded access to long term services and supports should be incorporated into health care reform.

- People with disabilities shall have access to health care practitioners who understand their unique needs and challenges and who practice in facilities that are accessible.
- Rehabilitation providers should be entitled to receive appropriate and timely reimbursement in order to meet the needs of the people they serve.

B. Agenda

- **ACCSES will provide its members with education and technical assistance to explore new oversight initiatives and business opportunities within health care and entitlement reform.**
- **ACCSES will promote health care reforms that will fully and equally include people with disabilities.**
- **ACCSES shall monitor and support efforts to increase the availability, accessibility, and safety of quality private health care services and ensure that a basic benefit package in health care reform efforts includes services for individuals with disabilities such as: rehabilitation and habilitation services, DME, orthotics and prosthetics, and related supplies.**
- **ACCSES shall work with Congress and the Administration to ensure access to and availability of the full scope of Medicaid disability services, including community-based rehabilitation and habilitation services.**
- **ACCSES shall work to secure adequate federal funding for disability-related services provided under Medicaid, SCHIP and other programs.**
- **ACCSES shall promote independent, community living through Medicaid state options and waivers (including ‘Money Follows the Person’ demonstration grants) emphasizing the importance of consumer choice; and shall promote the enactment of legislation such as the Community Choice Act and CLASS Act.**
- **ACCSES shall work to secure the funding and acceptance of Medicaid buy-in programs by states.**
- **ACCSES will seek to address ongoing workforce shortages, particularly direct support professionals, in the disability services sector.**
- **ACCSES believes Medicare should continue to eliminate barriers for people with disabilities including barriers such as the Medicare two-year waiting period, the “in the home” restriction on mobility devices, outpatient rehabilitation, therapy caps and the restriction on the availability of Medigap supplemental insurance coverage for individuals below the age 65.**

III. Education

A. Principles

- Education programs shall be flexible to ensure success with the diverse and complicated needs of students with disabilities.
- Federal financial support for special education shall fully fund the mandated requirements.
- Goal planning for each student shall include an effective transition to adulthood, secondary education, and/or meaningful employment.
- Early childhood programs under IDEA shall be based upon child development principles, with a strong family component.

B. Agenda

- **ACCSES shall promote the protection of “due process” procedures under IDEA.**
- **ACCSES shall work with Congress and the Administration to promote the viability and effectiveness of early intervention for children with disabilities.**
- **ACCSES shall support the enhancement of parent training, advocacy, mentoring, and resource programs.**
- **ACCSES shall support federal grant programs that focus on transitional services and work with Congressional staff to ensure that transition services have a separate line-item in appropriations bills.**
- **ACCSES shall support the strengthening of linkages between federal, state and local programs to provide effective, ongoing services and supports.**
- **ACCSES shall advocate for full federal funding for IDEA.**

IV. Independence

A. Principles

- All federal policy shall support the rights of people with disabilities to make individual choices that affect their lives.
- The federal government shall continue to have a strong role in assuring and funding residential supports for people with disabilities.
- The federal government shall help to assure long term services and supports for people with disabilities.
- The federal government will maintain funding for Home and Community Based Services.
- All people with disabilities shall have the opportunity to participate in their community through meaningful daily activities that promote learning and independence.
- People with disabilities shall have access to assistive technologies.
- There shall be accessible and safe transportation available for individuals with disabilities.

B. Agenda

- **ACCSES shall support the enforcement of civil rights legislation and regulation to eliminate discrimination based on disability.**
- **ACCSES shall support the adoption of legislation and promulgation of regulations that affect the civil rights based on disability to remedy discrimination.**
- **ACCSES shall coordinate with other organizations to support paratransit and other mechanisms to ensure appropriate transportation services to people with disabilities.**
- **ACCSES shall work with the ITEM (Independence Through Enhancement of Medicare and Medicaid) Coalition to attempt to expand coverage for assistive devices for people with disabilities.**
- **ACCSES shall support efforts to preserve and expand housing opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the least restrictive and most integrated environment possible.**
- **ACCSES shall support enactment of the Community First Choice Option as a first step towards eliminating the institutional bias under Medicaid in favor of home-and-community-based services.**

- **ACCSES will seek to address ongoing workforce shortages, particularly direct support professionals, particularly in the disability services sector.**
- **ACCSES shall support HHS and DOJ efforts to bolster enforcement of the Olmstead Act.**
- **ACCSES will monitor the HHS Community Living initiatives and participate as appropriate.**

ACCSES Member Organizational Issues

- **ACCSES shall monitor and respond to issues that impact its members in terms of their businesses and organizations including:**
 - Health care reform and members' ability to remain viable under new health care and human service payment systems, and not have onerous provisions placed upon them to provide health insurance;
 - Non-profit legislation and IRS regulations;
 - Medicaid reimbursement changes, including fraud, waste and abuse initiatives and their affect on rehabilitation providers; and
 - WIA/Rehab Act reauthorization's impact on rehabilitation providers.
- **ACCSES shall provide educational and technical assistance sessions pertaining to issues impacting rehabilitation providers.**
- **ACCSES will support coalitions and other organizations dealing with legislative and regulatory matters affecting ACCSES member organizations to the extent they are consistent with ACCSES's position on such matters.**
- **ACCSES will help members develop relationships with people and organizations in positions of influence at the national and local levels.**
- **ACCSES shall publish a statement of governance and statement of ethical conduct approved by members.**