



December 10, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
House Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
House Majority Leader  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Steny Hoyer  
House Minority Whip  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Greg Walden  
Chairman  
Energy & Commerce Committee  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Ranking Member  
Energy & Commerce Committee  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Brett Guthrie  
Representative  
Energy & Commerce Committee  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Debbie Dingell  
Representative  
Energy & Commerce Committee  
United States House of Representatives

Dear Speaker Ryan, Minority Leader Pelosi, Majority Leader McCarthy, Minority Whip Hoyer, Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Pallone, Rep. Guthrie and Rep. Dingell:

The American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) strongly supports passing H.R. 7217 to reauthorize the Money Follows the Person (MFP) Medicaid demonstration program. Reauthorizing MFP is our top legislative priority in the lame duck session. Beyond the potential harms to persons with disabilities and older adults that would occur if MFP was not reauthorized, we also anticipate disruption, confusion, and new administrative burdens on states.

ANCOR is a national, nonprofit trade association representing more than 1,400 private community providers of services to people with disabilities and 55 state associations. Our members provide vital and intensive services from assisting with daily life activities to providing support and access to the greater community. Combined, we service over one million individuals with disabilities and work to shape policy, share solutions and strengthen the community.

As the nation mourns the loss of President George H.W. Bush, we remember him for championing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to end, in his words, "the shameful wall of exclusion" so that

“every man, woman, and child with a disability can now pass through once-closed doors into a bright new era of equality, independence, and freedom.”

While Congress has made great bipartisan strides in ensuring persons with disabilities can be integrated into their communities, systematic biases still exist that favor more costly institutional care over home and community-based services (HCBS). MFP follows in that proud history of passing bipartisan legislation to ensure that individuals with disabilities are able to live in the setting of their choice.

First authorized in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, with strong bipartisan support and signed into law by President George W. Bush, the MFP program has helped more than 88,000 older adults (CMS, 2018) and people with disabilities – nearly one-third of them older adults -- transition out of nursing homes and other institutional settings back to living in their communities.

MFP has also enabled at least 43 states and the District of Columbia to develop the needed infrastructure to enhance people’s access to home and community-based services (HCBS), while helping states shift more of their resources to HCBS and reduce expenditures on more expensive institutional services.

According to CMS, 12 states have already exhausted their allotted MFP funding and the remaining state MFP programs will do so as well by December 31, 2018. As a result, states are transitioning fewer individuals and the progress we have made due to MFP in supporting people with disabilities in their communities is at risk, including compromised quality of life and health outcomes for beneficiaries, key staff layoffs at the state and provider levels, and loss of badly needed state Medicaid infrastructure.

We thank you and your staff for the bipartisan process to develop and pass this legislation, which will remove barriers for individuals and states, enhance accountability, and contribute to sharing of best practices across states. This will assist states with achieving cost-efficiencies in their Medicaid programs while simultaneously enhancing opportunities for individuals to live independent and self-directed lives in the community.

If you would like more information or to discuss further, please feel free to contact me at [smeek@ancor.org](mailto:smeek@ancor.org) or (202) 258-4462. We look forward to working with you on swift passage of this critical legislation.

Sincerely,



Sarah Meek, MSW  
Director of Legislative Affairs  
American Network of Community Options and Resources