



May 2026

UCEDD programs like the IDRPP are currently being threatened with budget cuts and potential elimination by the Trump Administration. We urgently need your voice to protect vital disability programs under threat in the proposed federal budget.

The Issue

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is proposing a budget that would eliminate dedicated funding for University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs). While the total funding might not disappear, it would be redistributed to states as unrestricted block grants—with no guarantees that these funds would continue to support UCEDDs, or people with developmental disabilities at all.

If this proposal moves forward, states across the country, including Utah, will lose critical infrastructure that supports people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in education, employment, healthcare, transportation, mental health, and community living. These changes would also affect funding for autism services and interdisciplinary training programs that prepare future leaders in the disability field.

UCEDDs, like the Institute Disability Research, Policy & Practice, and others across the country, have led national efforts in disability research, policy, and practice for over 50 years. Together with DD Councils and Protection & Advocacy organizations, they form a coordinated, cost-effective national network created by the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act).

Eliminating any part of this system weakens the whole. Today, 68 UCEDDs across the country work to build and strengthen stated disability support system which helps allow for independent living and full participation for people with disabilities in our communities.

Here's what you need to know.

- 1. The FY27 Federal Budget proposal calls for the elimination of UCEDDs as independent programs:** The President's Budget Proposal folds the UCEDDs' funding and four other unique programs into the Independent Living (IL) program under a single, broad budget. Combining these programs will make these systems inefficient, directly conflict with federal law, and result in immense nationwide harm for people with disabilities, research institutions, and the disability workforce.
- 2. This will have a dire impact on the disability population in Utah and nationwide:** UCEDDs have been supporting people with disabilities for over 60 years through research,

training, and community services. Our independence has allowed us to work efficiently and effectively with other Independent Living programs to advance services and supports for families.

- 3. The Administration's FY27 budget proposal risks dismantling this essential infrastructure:** The current budget proposal proposes dismantling Projects of National Significance (PNS), Limb Loss Resource Center, Paralysis Resource Center, and the Voting Access for People with Disabilities Program in addition to UCEDD funding.

Action Steps

You can help us by taking action today. Call or write your members of Congress and urge them to:

- Protect UCEDD programs by keeping them authorized under the DD Act and within the Administration for Community Living.
- Reject block grant proposals that remove oversight and weaken effectiveness.
- Preserve national disability data that informs policy and improves services.
- Defend a proven, bipartisan network that strengthens communities and lives.

We've attached sample messages and talking points to this email to help you call or write your representatives and senators. Please personalize your messages—and if possible, please call, write, and advocate over social media!

Additional Advocacy Resources

You can find additional advocacy resources on the Association of University Centers for Disability website at: <https://www.aucd.org/speak-up-for-ucedds>.

- AUCD Email/Letter Templates:
https://www.aucd.org/uploads/Policy_Advocacy/SaveUCEDDs_email_messaging.pdf
- AUCD Social Media Messages:
https://www.aucd.org/uploads/Policy_Advocacy/SaveUCEDDs_social_messaging.pdf
- AUCD Social Media Images:
https://www.aucd.org/uploads/Policy_Advocacy/Save_UCEDDs_AUCD_Images.pdf

Thank you for standing with the disability community, and for your advocacy on behalf of UCEDDs and other DD Network programs.