
Governmental Affairs Update

During the month of April, The Arc of New Jersey continued advocacy for a \$1.25 an hour wage increase for Direct Support Professionals in the FY18 Budget. As Chair of the Coalition for a DSP Living Wage, The Arc testified at the Senate Budget Committee and held one-on-one meetings with members of both the Senate and Assembly Budget Committees.

Also last month, The Arc of New Jersey participated in a roundtable discussion with US Senator Bob Menendez at his office in Newark. The event, which was held in honor of Autism Awareness Month, was an opportunity to voice our strong opposition to potential changes to Medicaid that continue to dominate policy talks in our nation's capital. The Arc of New Jersey urged Senator Menendez to fight back against any shifts in the Medicaid program structure, like block grants or per capita caps, which would ultimately result in reduced eligibility and less availability of long-term supports and services. To read more about this event, [click here](#).

Finally, The Arc of New Jersey finished out Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month with a proclamation from Assemblyman Raj Mukherji at his Jersey City District Office. The New Jersey Self Advocacy Project and Self-Advocates from The Arc of Hudson County were presented with the resolution, given a tour of the Assemblyman's office and the opportunity to meet staff members and learn more about the work they do at a legislative office. In addition to raising awareness, Self-Advocates also used the occasion to talk about DSPs and the importance of raising their wages in the FY18 Budget. Assemblyman Mukherji is a member of the Assembly Budget Committee.