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A family-based  
organization for people  
with intellectual and  
developmental disabilities



***The Arc***®

***New York***

*Stronger Together!*

The Arc New York Advocacy and Policy Webinar  
November 18, 2021



# Webinar Overview

Purpose of this advocacy and policy webinar is to educate Chapters, advocates, board members, and stakeholders on our past successes, budget priorities, and advocacy strategy going into 2022

- Highlight advocacy accomplishments
- Give an overview of the political and fiscal landscape
- Announce our talking points and goals for FY23
- Outline advocacy strategy and timeline from November 2021 to February 2022

# Regional Rallies and Events

Rally events across the state have garnered great participation and response from the media. Additional events are currently being planned.

- July 29, 2021 - Schenectady ARC Regional Rally
- July 2021 – Release of I/DD Workforce Whitepaper
- August 12, 2021 – White House Roundtable
- August 26, 2021 – Central New York Regional Workforce Rally
- September 14, 2021 – Oral Testimony NYS Senate Hearing on Workforce
- September 21, 2021 - Southern Tier Workforce Rally
- October 19, 2021 – Lower Hudson Valley Virtual Rally
- November 9, 2021 – NYC Rally
- December 15, 2021 - Legislative Forum on Budget
- January 12, 2022 Statewide Rally on Budget Priorities
- February 14 & 15 Joint Legislative and Policy Forum

## Sample of press hits

- Capital Tonight
- Times Union
- Newsday (op-ed)
- Syracuse Post Standard
- Spotlight News
- Daily Gazette
- CBS 6
- Fox 40
- Spectrum News
- Binghamton Homepage
- The Journal News (lohud)

# Legislative Meetings Continue

- Congresswoman Tenney
- Congressman Delgado
- Congressman Morelle
- Congressman Jacobs
- Congressman Katko
- Congressman Tonko
- Congressman Reed
- Congresswoman Rice
- Senator Hinchey
- Senator Griffo staff
- Senator Tedisco
- Assemblyman Brian Miller
- Assemblyman Santabarbara
- Assemblyman Palmesano



# Overview of Landscape

- Status of Build Back Better Act
  - Congressional Budget Office (CBO) score
  - Possible movement on budget reconciliation
- ARPA HCBS eFMAP state plan approval
- NYS mid-year financial plan update
- 2022 elections
  - Primary race for governor
  - NYS Senate, Assembly, & US Congressional races

# FY 2022 Budget Ask

## INVESTMENT IN NEW YORK'S CARE ECONOMY

1. Cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) of 5.4% for FY 2023
  - Total Value for Field = \$484M
2. 20% increase for DSPs in 100, 200, and 300 classes (not a bonus, salary increase) and ensure this does not create a fiscal cliff in future years
  - Total Value for Field = approximately \$500M

# Talking Points for COLA

## **COLA – Projected to be 5.4% for FY 2023**

Following a decade of provider agencies not receiving the statutory required cost of living adjustment (COLA), the significant fiscal impacts of COVID-19 and the current level of inflation, agencies have experienced significant cost drivers that necessitate the full 5.4% COLA, as provided for in the July 2021 CPI-U report.

Agencies have seen significant cost increases related to mandated fringe benefits, repairs and maintenance, utilities, food, supplies, transportation and insurance over the past 12 months, which has resulted in significant financial pressure on agencies. Additionally, since the I/DD provider agencies are solely funded by Medicaid funding, agencies are unable to increase the cost of services to compensate for increased costs of operations. This has also directly led to provider agencies' inability to invest in workforce wages for direct care workers, which has resulted in wage stagnation for the past decade.

# Talking Points for 20%

## Workforce Funding

- Continued investment in DSPs' salaries is vital for recruitment and retention of skilled staff, and for future viability of the field.
- As proposed in the OPWDD eFMAP plan, direct care CFR Title Code 200 series staff will receive a 20% increase. It is critical to maintain and expand 20% wage enhancements to continue these significant efforts. To bolster this significant investment, we recommend the following actions:
  - Expand to CFR Title Code 100 and 300 Series Frontline Workers.
  - Secure a commitment to continued funding of the 20% wage enhancement to prevent a fiscal cliff.

# Other Talking Points and Budget Requests

## Recruitment and Retention

In addition to increased wages for staff, the following strategies as put forth by NYDA through the Workforce White Paper and by provider associations have been identified as priorities for inclusion:

- Establishing a Personal Income Tax Credit for Direct Care Staff  
This would be a \$2,500 – \$5,000 refundable personal income tax credit for employees providing direct care to individuals with I/DD, employed by a not-for-profit provider agency and would be phased out on individuals with AGI in excess of \$50,000 and would be limited to those with AGI under \$100,000.
- Implementation of Statewide Recruitment Programs  
Expansion of the current BOCES and Community College Programs Statewide to facilitate employment in the direct care field.

# Other Talking Points and Budget Requests

## Implementation of Credential and Career Ladder Programs

- Credential Program – Advance language in the SFY 2023 Budget to implement a statewide standardized DSP credential program and continue funding to provide wage enhancements for DSPs, which will build upon the \$20 million eFMAP proposal put forth by OPWDD.
- Career Ladder – Advance language in the SFY 2023 Budget to establish a career ladder program, which will provide a pathway to an associate's degree in the human services field for current DSPs.

State of New York advocacy for Federal Direct Support Professionals  
Standard Occupational Classification

The Arc New York's Regulatory Reform Proposals (provided in toolkit)

# Overall Engagement Strategy

Meet with legislators early from December through to February to educate them on who we are, our concerns, and our budget priorities

- This is the best time to inform and explain Chapter operations, rates, impact of COVID-19 pandemic to legislators
- Highlight who The Arc New York is, why we are here, and why we are necessary

# November and December

Start scheduling meetings with legislators. If they cannot meet in December, schedule for January

- Make introductions if necessary and continue to build relationships with legislators
- Give overview of The Arc New York, your Chapter, the role of voluntary providers, and examples of supports and services
- Express the challenges, lay the groundwork for future advocacy

# January

- State of the State, which will give insights into the Governor's agenda
- January 12, 2022: tentative date for a statewide rally on our budget priorities prior to release of the budget
- Executive budget released mid-January
  - Start of one-click letter campaign
  - State office will provide budget analysis and release updated talking points and resources as needed

# February and March

- February 14 & 15 (possibly 16), 2022, Joint Legislative and Advocacy Forum, day of advocacy, meetings, and possible rally
- Reach out to legislators to schedule a second round of meetings with updated resources
  - Budget advocacy and negotiations will be in full swing and new meetings will need to be made through March and April

# Overview of Timeline

## November/December

- Start outreach to legislators
- Schedule meetings for December and January

## January

- Continue outreach
- State of the State
- Statewide Rally
- Executive budget mid-January

## February-March

- Joint Policy Forum/day of advocacy, meetings, possible rally
- Budget advocacy in full swing

# How to Prepare and Conduct Legislative Meetings

- Typically have 30 minutes
- Send informational materials in advance
- Have a prep meeting with attendees and assign speaking roles
  - This will ensure that all topics are covered
  - Create a balance between “inside baseball” and stories depending on who is available to speak
  - Make your request clear

# Example of Legislative Meeting Agenda

## Talking points and script for a meeting:

Board President: welcome and thank you for support, name specific bill if any

CEO: I knew we were essential and the pandemic has only made this more prominent.

Board Treasurer: specific dollars and the impact of cuts

Parent and or Self Advocate: (one who knows the representative, possibly even a donor) speak to the needs and impact on services

Agency Staff/DSPs: speak to the impact on the staffing crisis

Board Member, Parent or Self Advocate: close the meeting with a story (Ex. We have a Board Member who ties the situation back to Willowbrook with a very powerful message to convey to the representative that they need to do something now)

# How to get involved

- <https://www.thearcny.org/advocacy>

**Sign up for updates!**

Get advocacy news from The Arc New York in your inbox.

\* Email

First Name

Last Name

By submitting this form, you are consenting to receive marketing emails from: The Arc New York, 29 British American Blvd, 2nd Floor, Latham, NY, 12110, US, <http://www.thearcny.org>. You can revoke your consent to receive emails at any time by using the SafeUnsubscribe® link, found at the bottom of every email. [Emails are serviced by Constant Contact.](#)

Sign Up!

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HCBS Waiver Comments

HCBS Waiver Recommendations

# One-click Advocacy Tools

- With every campaign, The Arc New York creates custom tools for advocates, one of those tools is the Phone2Action platform
  - A dedicated link is provided for each campaign, so there is no searching
  - Allows advocates to easily submit letters to their representatives
  - Letter text is fully customizable
  - Opportunities to share campaign on social media
  - Call-in campaign capabilities

### Tell Your Representative: Support Historic Investments for Direct Care Workforce Supporting People with I/DD

Providers of supports and services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) are facing a critical workforce shortage, which needs immediate action by our federal representatives.

Through The ARC's national advocacy, we have influenced the creation of the [Better Care Better Jobs Act](#) (BCBJA) and are asking our New York state congressional representatives to sponsor this important legislation.

This is a once in a generation opportunity to transform the care economy infrastructure for all New Yorkers, while providing increased wages and opportunities for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), who are the backbone of the system of supports and services that people with I/DD and their families depend on.

A recent survey conducted by the New York state provider community found that the average vacancy rate of staffing is almost 25%, with 93% of providers seeing reduction in job applicants in the first quarter of 2021. This is not just a crisis; it is an emergency.

### Take Action and Contact Your Representatives NOW!

Title \* ▼


Full Name \*

Address \*

Zip \* city and state not required

Phone \*

Email \*

 **Send Email**

Subject: Support the Better Care Better Jobs Ac ...

My name is [@advFirst] [@advLast] and I am a constituent and supporter of New Yorkers with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). They are our family, friends, loved ones, and members of our community. Right now we need your help to support them with dedicated and sustainable workforce funding.

The repercussions from the COVID-19 pandemic

# What is NYDA and how are we involved?

- NYDA = New York Disability Advocates
- The Arc New York is a member along with all other major provider associations in NY (IAC, Long Island Alliance, NY Alliance, CP State, NYAEMP, DDAWNY)
- We pool resources to hire a lobbyist (Evan Sullivan – Ostroff Associates) and a PR firm (Kivvit) to help achieve our goals
- We agree on messaging and budgetary asks whenever possible to avoid the field being split

# The Arc New York Advocacy Strategic Initiative

- For the past year, The Arc New York has explored ways to improve upon, expand, and modernize our advocacy capabilities as part of our strategic plan.
- Some of the resulting conversations lead us to consider:
  - Review of our advocacy network, how we connect externally and interact internally
  - Greater consideration to include stakeholders outside of I/DD where mutual interests align
  - Integration our various advocacy committees to strengthen our efforts and combine talents

# Vision for The Arc New York Advocacy

- We are an organization of 100K members and will leverage our membership and size
- We will connect our grassroots advocates across the state with a common goal and provide the necessary tools to achieve it
- We will continue to educate and inform our advocates of issues beyond the budget

# What you can expect next

- November/December 2021 – finalized talking points
- December 2021 – State Office will release state legislator economic impact sheets for you to use in visits
- December 15, 2021 – NYDA legislative forum to educate lawmakers on our budget priorities
- January 12, 2022 – statewide budget rally with NYDA and other stakeholders
- January 2022 – launch of online campaign following release of Executive Budget
- February 14, 15 & 16 2022 – Joint Legislative and Advocacy Forum

# Questions? Feedback?

- What can The Arc New York do to make our efforts more successful in advocacy?
- What tools or information would you find helpful?
- When receiving “calls to action” and other advocacy related messages, which method do you find most helpful? Advocacy alerts? Direct email? Social Media?

# Thank You!



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