



S.I.B.S.
SUPPORTING ILLINOIS
BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Advocacy & Policy Committee

June 2026

CHAT WITH US!
SIBSADVOCACY@GMAIL.COM

MISSION

Provide information, supports, and tools to build awareness around disability policy/ advocacy topics and aid siblings in advocating for the changes that are important to them and their brothers and sisters

What's New in Advocacy?

- **Medicaid Work Requirements:** Individuals in the ACA expansion Medicaid group aged 19-64 without children will have to meet work requirements to receive benefits as of January 2027. To receive medical exclusion from this rule, the individual must testify every 6 months that they need support with at least 1 activity of daily living AND cannot work at all. This means individuals who work less than 80 hours a month have to make the difficult decision to either quit their job to maintain benefits or keep working and lose their Medicaid benefits.
 - Those in the AABD Medicaid category have no work requirements. Most people with disabilities who receive SSI, SSDI, or are DAC recipients have already been moved to the AABD Medicaid category. Check your status on the ABE portal at abe.illinois.gov. Contact us if you need help verifying or correcting your Medicaid category.
 - **If you have a disability but do not receive SSI, we urge you to apply, appeal, or reapply immediately to limit Medicaid coverage disruptions.**
 - **HFS Stakeholder Webinar Series: Medicaid Changes:** Please register and view the following webinars for additional critical information on Medicaid changes.
 - HR1 Module 2: Non-citizen Eligibility Changes & Alternative Resources ([Registration Link](#))
 - Tuesday, June 23, 2026, 1:30 PM - 2:15 PM (Central Time)
 - HR1 Module 3: Work Requirements & Community Engagement ([Registration Link](#))
 - Tuesday, July 14, 2026, 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM (Central Time)
 - HR1 Module 4: Exemptions from Work Requirements ([Registration Link](#))
 - Wednesday, July 22, 2026, 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM (Central Time)
 - HR1 Module 5: Redeterminations and Retroactive Coverage ([Registration Link](#))
 - Thursday, August 20, 2026, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (Central Time)
 - HR1 Module 6: Common Questions and Answers Regarding Medicaid Changes ([Registration Link](#))
 - Tuesday, September 15, 2026, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (Central Time)
 - **Illinois FY2027 Budget Updates:** The FY2027 budget totals \$55.9 billion in general funds and relies on approximately \$649 million in new revenue. Major spending areas include:
 - Healthcare: \$47.4 billion (36%), driven primarily by Medicaid obligations.
 - Education: \$22.6 billion (17%), including full funding of the Evidence-Based Funding Formula.
 - Human Services: \$17.6 billion (13.4%), including programs that support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
 - Government Operations and Pensions: \$26.2 billion combined, including a \$10.7 billion pension contribution and a 3% legislative pay increase.
 - Economic Development: \$10.1 billion (7.6%).
- Illinois Budget Wins:**
- A \$0.60 per hour Direct Support Professional wage increase while protecting the 50/50 allocation that advocates fought hard to preserve.
 - \$37.5 million to implement the Zero-Hour Staffing Model recommended through the Guidehouse Rate Study.
 - \$33.9 million for Ligas placements, supporting approximately 630 individuals moving into community-based services.



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- **SB3340, Protective Medical Equipment Freedom Act** is an Illinois bill that establishes the right for all individuals in Illinois to wear protective medical equipment, such as masks, respirators, face shields, and gloves, in any public place where they are lawfully present, without being required to disclose their health status. **Contact Democrats in the IL Senate and ask them to co-sponsor this bill.** Scripts for calling and emailing can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ILDemScripts>
- **S.I.B.S. has signed onto a joint letter** urging Congress to consider the immense harm that detention and violent immigration and law enforcement activities have on immigrants and families, including those with disabilities, those who are Deaf and hard of hearing and caregivers. We have urged Congress to halt all funding to DHS and reallocate the funding towards Medicaid, SNAP, and other essential services for people with disabilities, like our siblings. You can view the letter here: <https://tinyurl.com/JointLetterSIBS>
- **S.I.B.S. has also signed onto a joint letter with the National Down Syndrome Congress** urging the Social Security Administration (SSA) not to remove the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as a qualifying form of public assistance when determining whether a household qualifies as a “public assistance (PA) household” for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) purposes—particularly when one household member receives SSI and another receives SNAP. You can view the letter here: <https://tinyurl.com/NDSCSIBSLetter>

LTSS Workforce Advocacy Event

Join us for an evening exploring the impact of current immigration policies on workforce shortages within the long-term services and supports (LTSS) field.

We know how critical it is to find stable, compassionate care for our brothers and sisters. This event will explore how immigration policies are affecting the LTSS workforce and what that means for our siblings. Together, we'll learn what's at stake, understand current data, and leave empowered with clear, practical methods to reach legislators and push for policy change.

This virtual event hosted by the Advocacy & Policy Committee will take place on **March 19th from 6:30-7:30PM**

Please register here: <https://tinyurl.com/SIBSevent>



March 2026



Primary elections are taking place on March 17. A&P Committee member Aubrey has prepared a [voting resource guide](#) with information on disability issues and contacting candidates.



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- **Justice in Aging** is hosting an upcoming webinar for advocates on the topic of Medicaid work requirements and who they apply to. Presenters will discuss how exemptions and other protections should be implemented to prevent coverage loss and administrative burden, particularly among older adults and caregivers. Advocates will gain strategies and tools to use in the implementation and policy-setting stage to help ensure states comply with the law and adopt as many optional protections as possible.

The webinar will take place on Thursday, February 5, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. CT and will run for 60 minutes.

Register here: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/4317684225989/WN_-6IA5aNBROcnjObIPV0h9Q#/registration

- **Congressional appropriations committees have rejected the President's proposed block-granting and elimination of IDEA programs.** An appropriations bill has passed out of the House and is moving to the Senate. This bill prohibits the U.S. Department of Education from transferring any education funding to another federal agency unless an appropriations law allows it to do so.
- S.I.B.S. has signed onto a coalition letter urging the Social Security Administration (SSA) not to remove the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** as a qualifying form of public assistance when determining whether a household qualifies as a "public assistance (PA) household" for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) purposes—particularly when one household member receives SSI and another receives SNAP.

Preparing for Emergencies

S.I.B.S. understands that today's world can be unpredictable. You may wonder what to do if there is an emergency situation with law enforcement where you are separated from your sibling. Here are some steps you may take.

- **Know your rights:** Law enforcement cannot enter your home without a signed judicial warrant. You do not have to answer any questions or sign any documents. You may want an attorney, but they do not have to provide you with one and you will have to pay for it yourself.
- **What you can do:** You and your sibling should carry valid documents. Examples: Immigration status, proof you have been living in the U.S. for the past 2 years, government issued ID, work, school or medical records, a signed lease, housing contract or mortgage, or mail received at your home address. These documents can help you avoid expedited removal and preserve your right to a court hearing. You will want to memorize important phone numbers. You will likely not have access to your cell phone if you are detained. Consider using [this sample card](#) of important numbers and details that your sibling can carry with them, such as on a wearable lanyard.
- **To find someone detained by ICE:** Go to locator.ice.gov and use name, birthdate, and country of birth. If possible, use the A-number and country of birth.
- **Immigration Legal Services:** National Immigrant Justice Center - (312) 660-1370 immigrantjustice.org, American Immigration Lawyers Association - www.aialawyer.com

January 2026



Primary elections are coming up on March 17. It is critical to vote and understand how candidates' policy positions may impact our siblings in the future. Stay tuned for more information from S.I.B.S.