

The ABLE Age Adjustment Act & SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act

Sample Phone Call Script

Below is a sample phone script advocates can use when calling lawmakers' offices urging them to support the ABLE Age Adjustment Act & SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act. Feel free to edit it for your needs.

1. **Find the phone number of the lawmaker** – Use the [Find Officials](#) tool on this website to look up your lawmaker and find the Capitol Office number.
2. **Introduce yourself to the person who answers the phone:** Most likely a staff member will answer the phone. Introduce yourself to the staff member and tell them exactly where you live. This reiterates to them that you are a constituent!

Sample: *My name is Sheila Smith and I live on First Ave in Rockville, Maryland. I am living with a disability and a wheelchair user. Thank you for taking my call this afternoon.*

3. **Tell your story:** Sharing your **personal story** is the most effective way to get the attention of policymakers and it makes all the difference in your advocacy. This will show why the public policy you are supporting is important to you and your family.

Make sure to include:

- a. How you got involved with MDA and a little bit about what it does.
- b. Connect your story to these economic bills. Make this part as personal as possible and give real life examples of the hurdles you or your family have faced while trying to gain economic independence.

Sample: *When I graduated from college, I immediately wanted to get a good job. Unfortunately, when I factored in my potential salary, I realized I would lose crucial SSI benefits. Therefore, I couldn't take an employment opportunity. In addition, I am hesitant to marry my long-term partner for the same reason.*

OR

Sample: *Unfortunately, my disability appeared later in life and therefore am not eligible to set-up an ABLE Account. This is a big financial burden that I feel like I shouldn't bear.*

4. **Make the ask:** At this time, make the ask of the lawmaker. Urge them to support the ABLE Age Adjustment Act or SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act. It is vital you make this specific as possible.

Sample: *While I had hoped to see the SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act (S. 4102) included in the end of year omnibus package, I urge Senator Jones to support this bill as Congress reconvenes in 2023. This bill would improve SSI benefits by increasing the asset limit to \$10,000 for individuals and \$20,000 per couple and adjusts these numbers to inflation. The current limits of \$1,000 for individuals and \$2,000 for couples makes it exceedingly difficult to save for things like wheelchair repairs, which are not covered by Medicaid. Please make this a priority in 2023.*

OR

Sample: *I am asking Senator Jones to support the omnibus agreement and ABLE Age Adjustment Act (H.R. 1219/S. 331), which would allow more people to establish an ABLE savings account by increasing the age by which an individual must have established a qualifying disability from 26 to 46. Please ensure the end of year package passes.*