



SENATOR HARRY REID, MAJORITY LEADER FIGHTING FOR NEVADANS WITH DISABILITIES



During Senator Reid's years in public service, he has met with countless Nevadans with disabilities to discuss the challenges they face every day. Although our nation has seen remarkable progress in addressing disability issues, the stories told by these Nevadans are evidence that much more remains to be done. This is why Senator Reid continues to work to strengthen the Americans with Disabilities Act, remove barriers to good health care coverage, and promote independence and equal opportunity for all members of society.

Senator Reid is a Strong Supporter of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Senator Reid strongly supported this landmark civil rights law, which guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications. He was also an original cosponsor of the *ADA Restoration Act of 2008*, which was signed into law on September 25, 2008. This bill restored the broad protections that Congress intended when it passed the ADA, and reverses recent Supreme Court decisions that have significantly narrowed the class of people covered by the ADA. [S. 933, Senate Vote 152, 07/13/90, P.L. 101-336; H.R. 3195, Unanimous Consent, 09/11/08, P.L. 110-325]

Senator Reid Led the Effort to Pass Landmark Health Insurance Reform Legislation Providing Coverage to More Than 600,000 Uninsured Nevadans. Senator Reid worked tirelessly to pass legislation that will lower costs, create greater choices, and improve the quality of health care for American families. By providing Nevadans with a variety of coverage options and limiting the ability of insurance companies to discriminate against consumers, the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* (Affordable Care Act) improves access to higher quality health care. Signed into law on March 23, 2010, this landmark legislation provides lower-cost prescription drugs to Nevada seniors, and \$5 billion in tax credits for Nevadans to purchase

HIGHLIGHTS OF SENATOR REID'S DISABILITY ISSUES RECORD

- ★ Senator Reid is a Strong Supporter of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- ★ Senator Reid Led the Effort to Pass Landmark Health Insurance Reform Legislation Providing Coverage to More Than 600,000 Uninsured Nevadans
- ★ Senator Reid Secured Enactment of a New Long-Term Care Program (CLASS) to Help People with Severe Disabilities Stay in Their Homes and Communities
- ★ Senator Reid Supported Medicaid Provisions Benefiting the Disability Community
- ★ Senator Reid Secured Increased Funding for Medicaid to Help Nevada Cope with the Economic Crisis and Led the Effort to Extend This Federal Assistance
- ★ Senator Reid Helped Boost Funding for Special Education Services to the Highest Level Ever
- ★ Senator Reid Prevailed Over a Bush Veto and Successfully Passed Legislation to Ensure Doctors Who See Medicare Patients are Fairly Compensated
- ★ Senator Reid Fought to Pass Stem Cell Research Legislation
- ★ Senator Reid Has Supported Funding for Lifesaving Medical Research and Legislation to Help Prevent, Treat, and Cure a Wide Range of Illnesses
- ★ Senator Reid Supports Protection and Advocacy Programs Benefiting Nevadans with Disabilities
- ★ Senator Reid Has Fought to Increase Opportunities and Job Training for Nevadans with Disabilities
- ★ Senator Reid Secured Millions of Dollars for Health Care Facilities and Programs for Nevada
- ★ Senator Reid Championed Assistance for Out-of-Work Nevadans in Continuing COBRA Coverage and Continues to Work to Extend the Program
- ★ Senator Reid Fought to Pass Legislation to Improve the Quality and Availability of Mental Health Services
- ★ Senator Reid is the Senate's Strongest Advocate for Protecting Social Security from Privatization, Deep Benefit Cuts, and the Misuse of Social Security Trust Funds
- ★ Senator Reid Secured Over \$1 Billion for Improvements to Social Security's Infrastructure and Other Significant Benefits for Seniors in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

private insurance within the first five years of this bill's enactment. [H.R. 3590, Senate Vote 396, 12/24/09, P.L. 111-148; H.R. 4872, Senate Vote 105, 03/25/10, P.L. 111-152]

- ***Eliminates Insurance Company Discrimination*** Starting this year, the new law provides people who have health problems but lack access to health insurance with access to a plan that protects them from medical bankruptcy. The Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plan is a stop-gap measure that will serve as a bridge to a reformed health insurance marketplace. Starting in 2014, the new law prevents insurance companies from denying coverage or charging more based on a person's medical history, including genetic information.
- ***Premium Tax Credits to Expand Private Insurance Coverage in Nevada*** Between 2014 and 2019, the new law will provide \$5 billion in premium tax credits and cost-sharing tax credits for residents in Nevada to purchase private health insurance. [Senate Finance Committee]
- ***Reduced Premiums*** The Affordable Care Act will lower premiums in the non-group market by 14% to 20% for the same benefits by 2016 – premium savings of \$1,380 to \$1,970 for a family in Nevada. [Senate Finance Committee estimate based on CBO, 11/30/09]
- ***New Options for Long Term Support and Services*** The new law provides a new, voluntary, self-insured insurance program that helps families pay for the costs of long-term support and services if a loved one develops a disability.
- ***Increased Medicaid Support*** The new law expands the Medicaid program to more Americans, including people with disabilities. The Federal government will fully fund the coverage expansion for the first three years of the policy, and continue substantial support, paying for 90% of costs after 2020, compared to Nevada's current FMAP of 50.2%. In total, Nevada could receive an additional \$3.6 billion in federal funding for Medicaid from 2014 to 2019 as a result of the expansion. [Federal Register 73:229, 11/26/08, p. 72051-72053; Senate Finance Committee]
- ***Improved Care for Chronic Disease*** The Affordable Care Act invests in innovations such as medical homes and care coordination demonstrations in Medicare and Medicaid to prevent disabilities from occurring and progressing and to assist one in every 10 Americans who experience a major limitation in activity because of a chronic condition. It also creates a temporary tax credit to encourage investments in new therapies to prevent, diagnose, and treat acute and chronic diseases.

Senator Reid Secured Enactment of a New Long-Term Care Program (CLASS) to Help People with Severe Disabilities Stay in Their Homes and Communities. Senator Reid was responsible for the inclusion of the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) program in the health reform law. Under this new voluntary initiative, workers may enroll, even if they have a preexisting condition, and pay premiums making them eligible for cash benefits should they later suffer from severe disabilities. These benefits will allow many individuals to stay in their homes and communities rather than being forced to seek institutionalized care. [H.R. 3590, Senate Vote 396, 12/24/09, P.L. 111-148]

Senator Reid Supported Medicaid Provisions Benefiting People with Disabilities. Senator Reid strongly supported provisions in the new health reform law that create new options for states to provide home- and community-based services to Medicaid beneficiaries, allowing people with disabilities the choice of staying in their homes. Senator Reid also supported the *Family Opportunity Act*, which allows the states, including

Nevada, to let parents with higher incomes buy into Medicaid for their children with disabilities. [H.R. 3590, Senate Vote 396, 12/24/09, P.L. 111-148; S. 1932, Senate Vote 363, 12/21/05, P.L. 109-171]

Senator Reid Secured Increased Funding for Medicaid to Help Nevada Cope with the Economic Crisis and Led the Successful Effort to Extend This Federal Assistance. Senator Reid fought to ensure that Nevada received the highest percentage increase in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP), the Medicaid match rate, of any state as part of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* (Recovery Act) at the beginning of last year. This \$450 million in funding for the state helped Nevada avoid cutting Medicaid and other key programs during the recession. Most recently, Senator Reid led the fight to extend this funding through the end of the next fiscal year, securing an additional \$79 million for Nevada's Medicaid program. In addition to ensuring coverage for children, parents, seniors, and people with disabilities, this extended funding will help states like Nevada retain employees and relieve state funding shortfalls, allowing the state of Nevada to continue to support affordable, quality medical care that more than 160,000 Nevadans rely on every day. The six month extension is critical as we work to emerge from these tough economic times. [S. 3000, Introduced 02/04/10; H.R. 1, Senate Vote 64, 02/13/09, P.L. 111-005; H.R. 1586, Senate Vote 228, 08/05/10, P.L. 111-226]

Senator Reid Helped Boost Funding for Special Education Services to the Highest Level Ever. Improving educational results for children with disabilities has been a top priority for Senator Reid. In 2004, Congress passed the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act*, which called for the federal government to provide 40 percent of the funding towards the cost of special education. After several years of a decreasing federal share, through the Recovery Act, Senator Reid helped ensure that the federal share of special education costs is at its highest level ever, and resulting in nearly \$75 million for special education programs in Nevada's schools. The Fiscal Year 2011 Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill included a nearly half billion dollar increase from last year and Senator Reid is committed to passing this important bill. [H.R. 1350, Unanimous Consent, 11/19/04, P.L. 108-446; H.R. 1, Senate Vote 64, 02/13/09, P.L. 111-005; S. 3686, Introduced 08/02/10]

Senator Reid Prevailed Over a Bush Veto and Successfully Passed Legislation to Ensure Doctors Who See Medicare Patients are Fairly Compensated. Senator Reid has long worked to ensure stable and fair compensation for Nevada providers who serve Medicare patients. In 2008, he led the Senate in overriding a veto by President Bush of the *Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008*. This bill stopped the looming 10.6% Medicare physician pay cut and provided a 1.1% physician fee increase for 2009. It helped ensure care for seniors and people with disabilities, extended the Physician Quality Reporting Initiative for two years, and increased reporting incentive payments, while reducing administrative costs. By encouraging physicians to transition to electronic prescribing, this legislation helps to prevent serious medical errors and save taxpayer dollars. It also includes measures to improve benefits for Nevada's people with disabilities by promoting beneficiary access to primary care services, providing Medicare mental health parity, and increasing coverage for preventative services. Senator Reid has led efforts to stave off additional cuts and continues to work for a comprehensive solution to physician payment in Medicare. [H.R. 6331, Senate Vote 177, 07/15/08, P.L. 110-275]

Senator Reid Fought to Pass Stem Cell Research Legislation. Senator Reid supported legislation that passed both the Senate and House in 2006 and 2007 that supported federal funding and regulation of stem cell research. Stem cell research offers unprecedented opportunities to treat a wide range of medical conditions for which there are few or no cures, and is supported by hundreds of leading medical and scientific associations and dozens of patient-advocacy organizations representing millions of Americans supported this legislation. [H.R. 810, Senate Vote 206, 07/18/06; S. 5, Senate Vote 127, 04/11/07]

Senator Reid Has Supported Funding for Lifesaving Medical Research and Legislation to Help Prevent, Treat, and Cure a Wide Range of Illnesses. Senator Reid has worked to direct a historic level of funding to the National Institutes of Health for biomedical research in areas such as ALS, spinal cord injury, autism, and muscular dystrophy. These investments could lead to new treatments or cures for a broad range of diseases and conditions.

- ***National Institutes of Health*** Senator Reid has an established track record of directing increased funding to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), our nation's premier medical research institution. As part of the Recovery Act, Senator Reid supported allocating over \$10 billion for the NIH. These investments could lead to new cures and treatments for a broad range of illnesses and conditions like cancer, Alzheimer's disease, heart disease, diabetes, Parkinson's disease, and spinal cord injuries. [H.R. 1, Senate Vote 64, 02/13/09, P.L. 111-005]
- ***ALS*** Senator Reid authored the *ALS Registry Act*, which authorizes a centralized registry of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, to significantly enhance the nation's efforts to find a treatment and cure. [S. 1353, Introduced 06/30/05; S. 1382, Unanimous Consent, 09/23/08, P.L. 110-373]
- ***Spinal Cord Injury*** Senator Reid worked to pass the *Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Act*, which promotes collaborative research, rehabilitation and quality of life initiatives for millions of individuals living with spinal cord injuries and paralysis. [H.R. 146, Senate Vote 106, P.L. 111-011]
- ***Autism*** Senator Reid worked to pass historic autism legislation in the Senate. The *Combating Autism Act of 2006* creates a federal roadmap to address autism and funds screening, intervention, and education efforts related to autism. Senator Reid has directed federal funds to educational institutions in Nevada in order to improve access to services for Nevadans and families affected by autism. [S. 843, Unanimous Consent, 12/07/06, P.L. 109-416; H.R. 2764, Senate Vote 441, 12/18/07, P.L. 110-161; S.Rept. 111-243 to S.3686, 08/02/10]
- ***Muscular Dystrophy*** Senator Reid supported the passage of the *Paul D. Wellstone Muscular Dystrophy Community Assistance, Research, and Education Amendments Act of 2008*, which expands federal research efforts to cure muscular dystrophy. [H.R. 5265, Unanimous Consent, 09/27/08, P.L. 110-361]

Senator Reid Has Fought to Increase Opportunities and Job Training for Nevadans with Disabilities.

Thanks to federal laws like the ADA, the *Vocational Rehabilitation Act*, and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, more people with disabilities are succeeding in school, entering the workforce, and becoming financially independent. However, significant disparities in employment rates, incomes, and career advancement still exist. The incentives between employment, health care benefits, and eligibility for government-sponsored programs can sometimes come into conflict for people with disabilities. To help address these conflicts, Senator Reid supported the passage of the *Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act*, legislation that allows individuals with disabilities to have greater access to Medicaid or Medicare coverage while employed. Throughout his career, he worked to send federal funding home to organizations like Opportunity Village, which provides job training and related services to southern Nevadans with intellectual disabilities. Senator Reid understands that work gives people not just an income, but also dignity and financial security. Like all Americans, people with disabilities deserve an equal chance at achieving as much success in the workplace as their abilities and determination will allow. Opening more doors to education, helping them get the job training and work experience they need, and ensuring their fair treatment under the ADA are just a few of the ways to make good on that promise. [S. 933, Senate Vote 152, 07/13/90, P.L. 101-336; H.R. 3195, Unanimous Consent, 09/11/08, P.L. 110-325;

H.R. 1180, Unanimous Consent, 10/21/99, P.L. 106-170; H.R. 4635, Senate Vote 278, 10/19/00, P.L. 106-377; H.R. 2673, Senate Vote 3, 01/22/04, P.L. 108-199; H.R. 2764, Senate Vote 441, 12/18/07, P.L. 110-161; H.R. 1105, Voice Vote, 03/10/09, P.L. 111-008]

Senator Reid Secured Millions of Dollars for Health Care Facilities and Programs for Nevada. During Senator Reid's time in the Senate, he has made it a priority to work for better health care for every Nevadan. Thanks to Senator Reid's efforts over the last decade, Nevada's medical research institutes and medical facilities have received tens of millions of dollars for construction, training, research and development, and various programs. Senator Reid's efforts helped ensure Nevada's public health and emergency response services have the resources necessary to provide high quality health care in response to any ailment. [P.L. 109-103; P.L. 110-161; P.L. 111-008; P.L. 106-377; P.L. 106-554; P.L. 108-447; P.L. 108-137; P.L. 108-199; P.L. 107-116; P.L. 111-008]

Senator Reid Championed Assistance for Out-of-Work Nevadans in Continuing COBRA Coverage and Continues to Work to Extend the Program. When workers lose their jobs, they often lose their health insurance at the time when they can least afford to go uninsured, and for people with pre-existing conditions, finding new insurance can be particularly difficult and costly. Senator Reid ensured that those Nevadans who lost their jobs would have assistance in participating in extended employer coverage through COBRA as part of the Recovery Act. Under the Recovery Act, eligible workers can receive a subsidy of 65% to help defray the cost of continuing their group coverage. [H.R. 1, Senate Vote 64, 02/13/09, P.L. 111-005]

Senator Reid Fought to Pass Legislation to Improve the Quality and Availability of Mental Health Services. Senator Reid was instrumental in the creation of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy, a coordinated approach laying out a suicide prevention framework drawing from the combined work of advocates, clinicians, researchers, and survivors. He also helped to pass the *Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act*, providing additional funding for research, training, and technical assistance to target youth suicide. Having lost his father to suicide, working to improve mental health services is deeply personal for Senator Reid. His experiences inspired him to introduce the *Stop Senior Suicide Act* in an effort improve interagency coordination and increase funding for the treatment of mental, psychoneurotic, and personality disorders. Senator Reid also supported legislation that will lower Medicare coinsurance for outpatient mental health, and helped to secure passage of mental health parity law in 1996 and 2008 that will ensure that mental illnesses are treated on par with other physical illnesses. [S.Res. 54, Unanimous Consent, 02/13/97, P.L. 105-009; S. 2634, Unanimous Consent, 09/09/04, P.L. 108-355; S. 1854, Introduced 07/23/07; H.R. 6331, Senate Vote 177, 07/15/08, P.L. 110-275; H.R. 3666, Unanimous Consent, 09/25/96; H.R. 1424, Senate Vote 213, 10/1/08, P.L. 110-343]

Senator Reid is the Senate's Strongest Advocate for Protecting Social Security from Privatization, Deep Benefit Cuts, and the Misuse of Social Security Trust Funds. When the Bush Administration tried to push an unpopular and fiscally irresponsible privatization of Social Security into law, Senator Reid led the successful opposition. Senator Reid's leadership helped prevent a policy which would have resulted in deep benefit cuts and increased debt. Senator Reid refuses to support any measure that would weaken Social Security or threaten the retirement security of the many seniors in Nevada and around the country. He also has consistently supported efforts to protect the sanctity of the Social Security Trust Fund. The Social Security Trust Fund is intended to protect the security of American workers who have worked hard and contributed to their communities – it should not be used for other government spending. Senator Reid believes that Social Security should not be included in the rest of the federal budget, and none of its funds should be diverted to other programs. [Reid/Baucus letter to President Bush, 09/20/06; S.Amdt. 703 to H.R. 1836, Senate Vote 122, 05/21/01; S.Amdt. 2857 to H.R. 2646, Senate Vote 27, 02/13/02; S.Amdt. 207 to H.R. 2, Senate Vote 27, 01/25/07; H.R. 5835, Senate Vote 326, 10/27/90, P.L. 101-508]

Senator Reid Secured Over \$1 Billion for Improvements to Social Security’s Infrastructure and Other Significant Benefits for Seniors in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The Recovery Act, championed by Senator Reid, included crucial funding to allow the Social Security Administration (SSA) to overhaul its aging infrastructure. This included \$500 million to upgrade SSA’s 30 year-old National Computer Center and an additional \$500 million for the SSA to improve processing of new disability claims, reduce the backlog of disability hearings, and conduct health information technology systems research and development.

[H.R. 1, Senate Vote 64, 02/13/09, P.L. 111-005]

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