

Why It Matters:

Asset limits for the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program have not been updated since 1989, despite inflation. SSI is an essential program that supports those with limited income and resources who are blind, older adults, or have a qualifying disability. Individuals who depend on SSI can only have \$2,000 in assets or face loss of this essential support. Assets include personal property, savings, life insurance, and retirement savings. As a result, SSI recipients are unable to save money or work even part-time, which keeps them in poverty and out of the workforce. In most cities, disabled people on SSI cannot even save enough money to cover basic needs, such as a rental deposit, first month's rent, and consistent access to healthy foods.

Most disabled individuals qualify for Medicaid through their SSI eligibility. Losing SSI benefits means also losing access to vital health care. Without Medicaid, disabled individuals cannot access Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS), which include essential personal care supports and services in community-based, rather than institutional settings. **No other health insurance in the U.S. covers HCBS**, therefore, owning over \$2,000 can jeopardize basic survival and access to healthcare. **Disabled individuals who choose to marry face an even lower asset limit, totaling \$3,000 for both spouses.** This means many disabled couples cannot get married or have to make the impossible choice between participating in this key part of family, community, and/or religious life or having the ability to pay for basic needs.

What the Bill Does:

The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Savings Penalty Elimination Act will:

- Raise the current asset limits from \$2,000 to \$10,000 for individuals, and from \$3,000 to \$20,000 for married couples.
- Index these limits to inflation to ensure they remain fair over time.

Updating asset limits would:

- Allow disabled individuals and older adults to save for **emergencies and unexpected expenses**
- Enable part-time work **without immediately losing essential benefits**
- Help SSI recipients **secure stable housing and afford daily necessities**
- Ensure people can **make personal choices, such as marriage, without risking financial hardship**



We urge you to co-sponsor and pass this bill to ensure that your disabled and older adult constituents are not penalized for saving money, working, or getting married.

To learn more and co-sponsor this bill, please contact:

Christina McCauley (Office of Senator Cortez Masto): Christina_McCauley@CortezMasto.Senate.Gov

Parker Reynolds (Office of Senator Bill Cassidy): Parker_Reynolds@Cassidy.Senate.Gov

Jill Hunter-Williams (Office of Representative Danny Davis): Jill.Hunter-Williams@Mail.House.Gov

Jacqueline Baggett (Office of Representative Brian Fitzpatrick): Jacqueline.Baggett@Mail.House.Gov