



ATRA in Action – November 2025

Advocacy and Legislative Update

Introduction

ATRA's advocacy activities are focused on bills, actions, or issues that directly impact the profession of recreational therapy or people with disabilities. ATRA responds to issues in a non-partisan manner to advocate and protect the recreational therapy profession and people served by recreational therapists.

In November, the second half of the month showed increased activity when the US government shutdown ended. The federal government officially entered a shutdown on October 1, the start of the federal fiscal year, and ended on November 13 after 43 days.

ACTION ALERTS/Calls to Action

- Senate Committee on Aging has requested stories of older adults in community living
- ATRA will be forming an A&L group to explore the issue of Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes. If you are an ATRA member who is interested in being a part of this, please email dawn@atra-online.com

Advocacy Activities

- A variety of topics have been posted on the ATRA member forum, [ATRA Connect](#), including health coverage gaps for people with disabilities, ATRA San Antonio General Session questions/answers, budget resolution and ending government shutdown, Medicaid work requirements and older adults, information sharing between government departments specifically for immigrants and refugees (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Homeland Security, and Customs & Border Patrol), Department of Education dismantling, Office of Civil Rights in DOE, Office of Special Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration, and reasonable accommodation vs. modification in the workplace
- Reviewed proposed rules in Federal Register including Children's Health and Medicaid, Catastrophic Health Emergency Fund Threshold for Native American Health

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ATRA Board of Directors: President; Nancy Nisbett, President; Ashley Bowen, President-Elect; Tameka Battle, Immediate Past-President; Amina Abdallah, Treasurer; Chelsea Farrington, Secretary; Members at Large: Jackson Amburn, Cliff Burnham, Jasmine Edwards, Kevin Enright, Lilli Higgins, Sofie Rodriguez



- Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities statement on the [transfer of Department of Education functions](#)

Meetings

- Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities (CCD) Developmental Disabilities, Autism, and Family Supports Task Force (two meetings in November)
- CCD Education Task Force meeting discussing changes at the Department of Education and actions for the coalition.
- CCD Health Task Force meeting focused on federal budget and appropriations.

What We Are Watching:

- Legislation and staff changes delayed or resulting from government shutdown
- Proposed rules for movie theaters to provide notice on the availability of closed movie captioning and audio descriptions for digit movies
- Continued dismantling of the Department of Education
- Impact of discontinuation of Affordable Health Care subsidies on people with disabilities
- Impact of Medicare and Medicaid changes

Sign On Letters During November

- Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities (CCD) on urgent need to extend the Affordable Care Act Advance Premium Tax Credits
- CCD letter on [transfer of Education Department programs to other agencies](#)
- CCD letter opposing [21st Century Dyslexia Act/S.3010/HR 5769](#)
- Coalition to Preserve Rehabilitation (CPR) letter of concern to the Department of Veterans Affairs to discontinue using CARF accreditation standards and terminating veteran experience survey within CARF accredited VA rehab programs
- Disability and Rehabilitation Research Coalition (DRRC) sign-on letter to the Senate on rehabilitation funding

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- Coalition to Preserve Rehabilitation (CPR) sign on letter supporting the [Dennis Benigno Traumatic Brain Injury Program Reauthorization Act of 2025 \(S. 2898\)](#)

Thank you to ATRA members who represent us on coalitions:

- Laura Holmes on ITEM Coalition
- Lizzy Terry on CCD Developmental Disabilities, Autism, & Family Supports Task Force

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