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ADAPT Holds Web Hearing in DC To Demand COVID Relief and Services for Aging and Disabled

Washington DC--- ADAPT, the nation's largest grassroots disability rights activist organization, is camped on the East lawn of the nation's Capitol, where they will hold a hearing from 2pm to 4pm Friday to impress Congress and American voters with the vital importance of Medicaid funded Home and Community-based Services (HCBS). These services make it possible for disabled and aging people to remain in their own homes instead of being forced into nursing homes and institutions, and also are critical for moving people out of those nursing homes and institutions which have become literal death traps during the Covid pandemic.

"Our hearing will be available on ADAPT National Facebook Live, and speakers include Sen. Bob Casey, former Congressperson Beto O'Rourke, and people from Texas, to Pennsylvania, to Florida and states in between," said Jennifer McPhail of Texas ADAPT. "There will be testimony on how the loss of the Affordable Care Act would be devastating for people with pre-existing conditions, and why it is imperative that Congress pass a new Covid relief package that includes funding for HCBS, PPE, housing, and livable wages for those who provide our care."

Disabled and aging people in nursing homes, institutions, and other congregate settings like jails, prisons, and detention camps, are dying of COVID at alarming rates, and in alarming numbers. Covid relief packages so far have pumped money into nursing facilities, but those funds have not prevented 40% of the Covid deaths, a total of over 70,000, from occurring in the nation's nursing homes. Every day more and more nursing facilities and other congregate settings are becoming Covid cluster sites.

ADAPT's hearing in DC will be echoed in communities across the nation, where testimony will be given locally and fed in to the online hearing.

"Of the measures passed to date by Congress to address the COVID pandemic, none has authorized funding to protect and support the 12 million disabled and aging people living in their own homes," said Rhoda Gibson activist from MA ADAPT. "Nor has any funding been authorized to provide a living wage, benefits, and hazard pay during the pandemic to support the attendant care workers who keep disabled and aging people living in their own homes. And none of the funding authorized so far has ensured that personal protective equipment and other necessary supplies are available to people living in the community and their workers."

Confirmation of Amy Coney Barrett before the November elections will also be addressed in the hearing. Based on the record of her decisions to date, and the upcoming ACA case on the Supreme Court docket, her confirmation could have dire consequences for disabled, aging and low income people. ADAPT demands that the appointment should not be rushed, but should be made by the incoming president.

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