

Senator Tom Udall & Representative Debbie Dingell Care Corps Demonstration Act

BACKGROUND



The nation's 65-and-older population is expected to almost double in size, from roughly 49 million in 2016 to nearly 95 million in 2060. As they age, many of these seniors will require long-term support and services, placing a growing burden on an already fragmented system. The system is already struggling to provide and finance care for seniors and individuals with disabilities who want to remain independent and receive services in their homes and communities.

The vast majority of care is currently provided by family caregivers; more than 41 million Americans provide more than \$470 billion in care to seniors and adults with disabilities every year. These caregivers fill a critical void, often because of the lack of access to affordable services gives them no other choice.

Many of those who need care cannot afford to pay for the services that would help them remain independent, but they have just enough money to be ineligible for Medicaid and the support services it would provide. Many family members pitch in to fill in the financial gaps whenever possible, keeping their loved ones out of high-cost nursing homes. These family caregivers often develop ailments of their own and need outside support to ensure that they can live healthy, productive lives and continue caring for their loved ones.

However, there simply aren't enough family caregivers to meet the growing need. In 2010, there were seven potential caregivers for every person over the age of 80. By 2030, that ratio is projected to drop by almost half, to 4:1. In the paid workforce, four million direct care workers provide long term support and services to individuals in need already. But demand is projected to grow there too – by 2030, an estimated 3.4 million direct care workers will be needed to work in long-term service and support settings.

Meanwhile, our economy continues to feel the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many young people are unemployed or underemployed, while other workers are re-training for more in-demand fields.

These are national challenges that require a national solution: Care Corps.

THE CARE CORPS DEMONSTRATION ACT:

- Authorizes grants for local Care Corps programs at \$10 million per year over five years;
- Places Corps volunteers in communities where they will provide services that help seniors and individuals with disabilities remain independent;
- Provides volunteers with health insurance and other benefits during their time of service, along with an educational award that can be used to pay education costs or loans;
- Helps build the caregiving and health care workforce needed to meet the demand for services; and
- Creates an opportunity for intergenerational relationships.