HEATHER HANCOCK-BLACKBURN

Self-Advocate | Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

LET PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES SAVE, MARRY & BUILD A FUTURE

My Story

I am a self-advocate with Down syndrome from Oklahoma City. I work for the Oklahoma State Department of Education and at DSACO as a self-advocate mentor. I also serve with the National Down Syndrome Advocacy Coalition and NDSC Self-Advocate Council.

Craig and I met at a Down syndrome convention in 2004 and fell in love. We had a commitment ceremony and call ourselves husband and wife, but we are not legally married. We want to marry and live together without losing the benefits that help us live independently.

"We love and care deeply about one another, but outdated laws would cause us to lose the supports we need to live independently."

WILL YOU PLEASE SPONSOR THE SSI SAVINGS PENALTY ELIMINATION ACT?

THE PROBLEM

SSI's Outdated Asset Limits

Individual limit: **$2,000**

Married couple limit: **$3,000**

Two unmarried SSI recipients can have $4,000 combined, but marriage can reduce their combined asset allowance to $3,000. These rules discourage marriage, saving and financial independence.

THE SOLUTION

Pass the SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act

S. 1234 / H.R. 2540

Individual asset limit: **$2,000 → $10,000**

Couple asset limit: **$3,000 → $20,000**

The bipartisan bill would also index limits to inflation and eliminate the marriage penalty in SSI asset rules by making the couple limit twice the individual limit.

WHY THIS MATTERS

MARRY
without being financially penalized

SAVE
for emergencies and the future

PLAN
for housing and transportation

WORK
and build financial independence

LIVE
with the person you love

DREAM
of a home and future together

"My dream is to save enough money someday to be able to buy a home for Craig and me."

Marriage. A home. Financial security. Independence. A future together.

OUR ASK: Please support the SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act (S. 1234/H.R. 2540).

WHY? This bill would let people with disabilities save more money without losing SSI. It would also update the savings limits each year and make the rules fairer for married couples. People with Down syndrome should be able to save for emergencies, housing, and their future.