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## Survival Coalition Statement on U.S. DOJ opinion

The U.S. Department of Justice released [an opinion](#) last week that argues core civil rights laws—the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and the 1999 Supreme Court Olmstead decision—do not require states to integrate people with disabilities into the community. U.S. DOJ’s new opinion is contrary to decades of interpretation and long-standing legal precedent.

“This U.S. DOJ opinion undermines the core civil rights laws that protect all people with disabilities from being forced into institutions,” said Tami Jackson Survival Coalition co-chair. “People with physical disabilities, intellectual and developmental disabilities, people who have acquired disabilities through illnesses or age, people with mental health conditions are all protected by the same laws. An attack on these laws is an attack on all of us.”

For decades, the *Olmstead v. L.C.* decision has affirmed a simple truth: segregation of people with disabilities is discrimination. The integration mandate is not optional — it is the foundation of disability civil rights, ensuring that people with disabilities can live, work, and participate fully in their communities.

“Federal dollars should be spent in a way that ensures people have access to the promises of the constitution,” said Jason Glozier, Survival Coalition Co-Chair. “People who are institutionalized unnecessarily are fundamentally unable to pursue life, liberty and happiness. We will not be told that the basic expectations every able-bodied person has, to live at home with people they choose, to work, to find joy is out of reach for us because we are disabled.”

“If states decide they don’t want to invest in home care, it’s not only people with disabilities who are impacted,” said Patti Becker, Survival Coalition co-chair. “Make no mistake, home care keeps older adults out of nursing homes, and most home care is paid for by states through Medicaid. Sending a signal to states that they can stop spending on home care for people with disabilities reduces the ability for everyone to get support in their homes and guarantees states will return to spending far more taxpayer dollars to put fewer people in more expensive institutions where they do not want or need to be.”

The U.S. DOJ opinion does not change the law, but advocates are concerned federal agencies will now not enforce current law or repeal rules that help people live in the community. This opinion is part of a larger pattern attacking disability rights. A separate legal case [Texas v. Kennedy](#) is challenging Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act. The lawsuit wants to overturn that protection and let states decide whether to provide community services and not worry about creating conditions that force people into institutions.