

# **What's New? Disability and Employment Policy U.S.A.**

**National Rehabilitation Conference, Helsinki Fair Centre  
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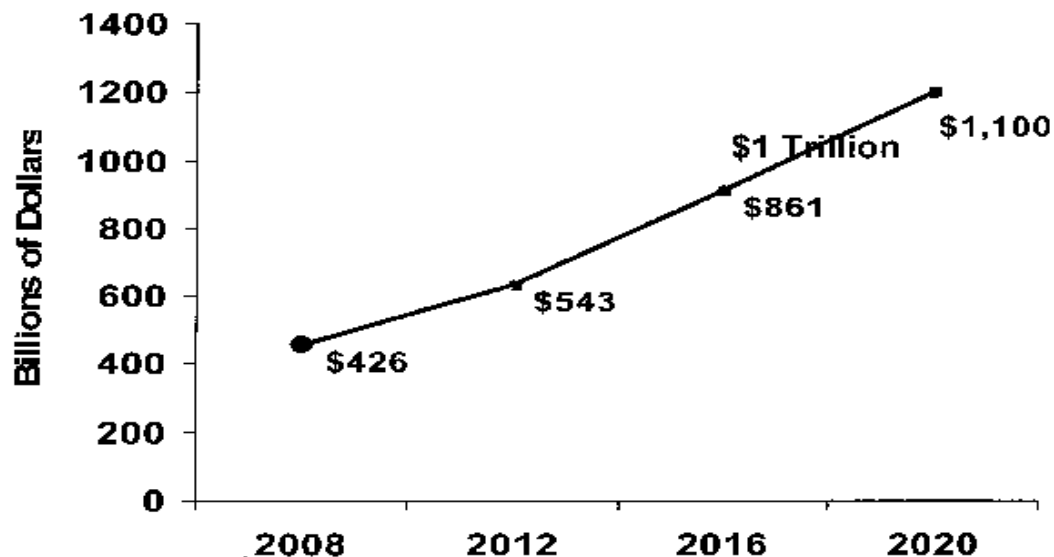
**Vice Chairman, Policy & Services Commission, Rehabilitation  
International (2008+)**

**Senior Policy Adviser, International Labour Organization (1998-2001)**

**Secretary General, Rehabilitation International (1993-1998)**

# Anticipated Growth in Social Security Expenditures, 2008-2018

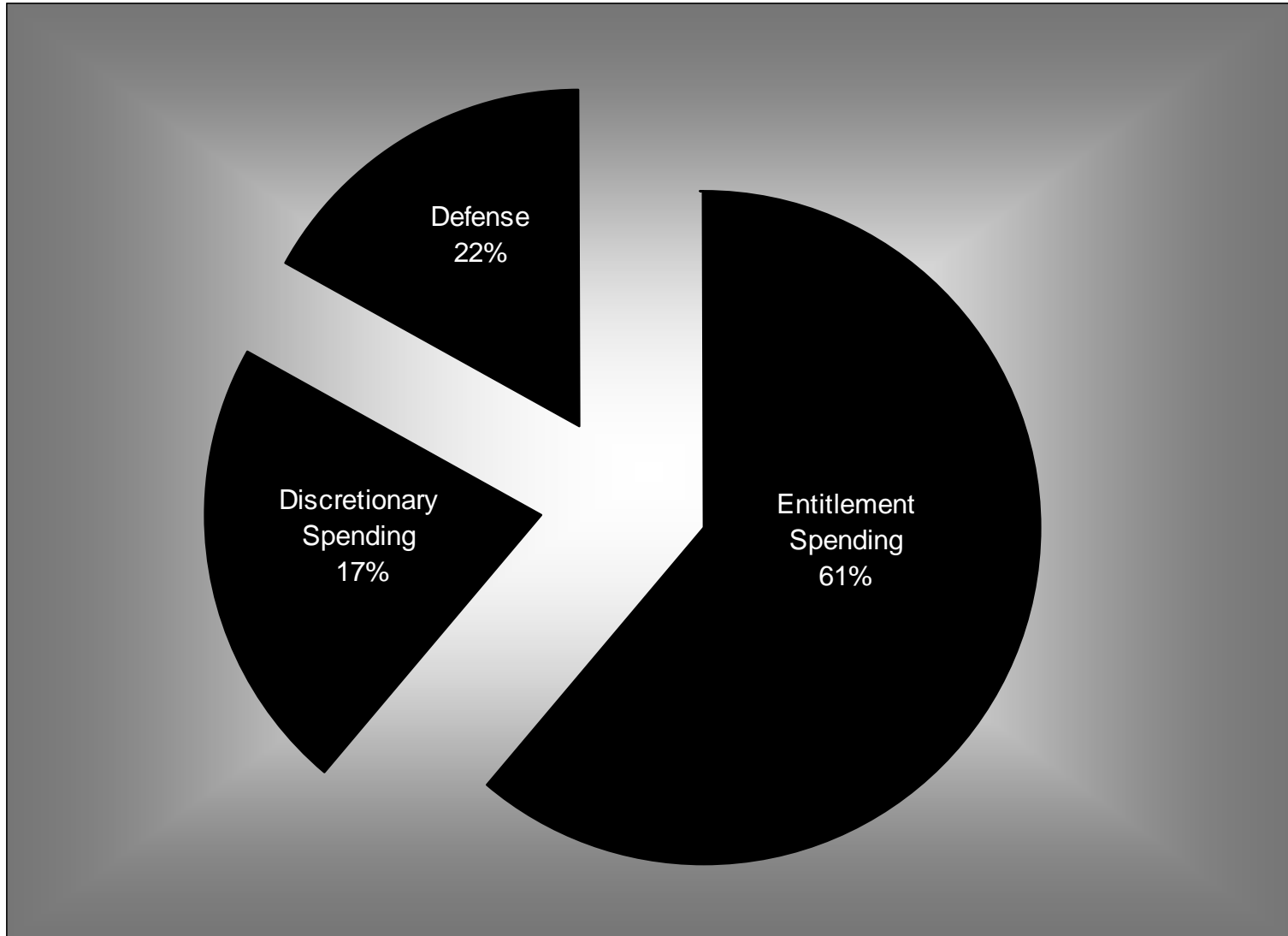
**Annual Expenditures for Federal Cash and Health Benefits for Persons With Severe Disabilities**  
FY 2008 – FY 2020



# Federal Spending Budget 2008

- **Entitlement Programs**, include Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid/SCHIP, Unemployment/Welfare, and National Debt Interest (total: \$1.788 trillion)
- **Discretionary Programs**, include Health & Human Services, Education, Veterans, Housing, Justice, Labor, State, Treasury, Interior, Transportation, Energy, Agriculture (\$487.4 bil)
- **Defense Programs** (\$626.6 billion)

# Federal Spending 2008



# People with Disabilities

## Age 16 and older, Feb '09

- Civilian non-institutional people 28,804
- Work in civilian labor force 6,141
- Employed 5,282
- Employment-population ratio 19.8
- Unemployed 859
- Unemployment Rate 14.0
- Not in the Labor Force 20,596

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, CPS

# Disability Employment Rate Measurement, new February '09

- Executive Order 13078 mandated development of a “statistically reliable and accurate” measure of the employment status of persons with disabilities. Work began by DOL’s Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in 1998.
- DOL’s Office of Disability Employment Policy supported intensive research into questions to be added to the Current Population Survey (CPS). Unemployment rate found to be 13.2 percent. <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsdisability.htm>

# ADA Amendments Act of 2008

- Effective January 1, 2009, the Act makes important changes to the definition of “disability,” rejecting certain holdings in several recent Supreme Court decisions and portions of the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC)
- ADA regulations. Examples: Expands definition of “major life activities”

# ADA Amendments, second page

- EEOC will revise its regulations defining term “substantially limits;”
- States that mitigating measures other than “ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses” shall not be considered in assessing whether an individual has a disability;
- Clarifies that an impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active.
- [http://www.eeoc.gov/ada/amendments\\_notice.html](http://www.eeoc.gov/ada/amendments_notice.html)

# Customized Employment: tailoring the job match

- CE is a universal strategy developed by ODEP for employers and job seekers that uses the abilities of the job seeker to negotiate job tasks.
- CE results in people thought to be “unemployable” entering or returning to the workplace.
- CE, after 5+ years of testing and validation has a fast-growing Community of Practice using CE techniques. The CE library contains research, policy briefs, web broadcasts and other publications.

# Guideposts for Success – Youth with Disabilities

- This research, validated policy framework developed by ODEP includes the five (5) areas that all youth, including youth with disabilities, need to experience in order to transition successfully to adulthood: (1) school-based preparatory experiences; (2) career preparation and work-based learning experiences; (3) youth development and leadership; (4) connecting activities; and (5) family involvement and supports. **Guideposts** aimed at special populations have been developed: mental health, foster care, juvenile justice.

# Mental Health and Employment

- Employment plays a critical role in the treatment and community participation of people with mental health disabilities.
- ODEP chairs the Employment Subcommittee of a government-wide initiative to coordinate the efforts of multiple federal agencies addressing various aspects of employment and mental health.

# United We Ride, a Transportation Initiative

- ODEP catalyzed the Initiative to become an expansive interagency effort to promote coordinated transportation for people with disabilities seeking employment.
- Transportation authorization recently passed, providing \$93.5 million in annual funding for employment-related transportation targeting people with disabilities, also calling for critical policy changes at the local level. All local agencies receiving federal transportation funding must plan for the employment-related transportation needs of jobseekers with disabilities.

# Supporting the Employment Success of Returning Service Members with TBI & PTSD

- Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) have emerged as prevalent injuries of the War in Iraq and Afghanistan. AHW is an education and outreach initiative containing fact sheets, reference guides on TBI/PTSD and related workplace accommodations, answers to common employer questions, real-life employment success stories.
- America's Heroes at Work web site:  
<http://www.AMERICASHOEROESATWORK.GOV>

# Policy Initiatives - Employers

- Job Accommodation Network  
<http://www.jan.wvu.edu>
- Workplace Referral Program
- Corporate Culture Study
- Customizing the Employment process (job seeker matched with the job)
- Employment First

# Importance of Rehabilitation

World is a Global Marketplace

- Increased labor force productivity
- Tools needed to build skills demanded by employers
- Portability of skills
- Increased competition
- Young labor force
- Demographic shifts, different in each region
- Western countries
- Least developed countries
- Developing countries

# OTHER RESOURCES

- Job Accommodation Network JAN
- <http://www.jan.wvu.edu>
- [jan@jan.wvu.edu](mailto:jan@jan.wvu.edu)
  
- Office of Disability Employment Policy  
ODEP, U.S. Dept. of Labor, 200  
Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington,  
DC 20210 [www.dol.gov/odep](http://www.dol.gov/odep)

# Contact Information

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