Happy Anniversary, SSI!

Supplemental Security Income Celebrates a Milestone

Forty years ago, President Richard Nixon signed the Social Security Amendments of 1972 into law, creating the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. The program [provides benefits to disabled adults and children and the elderly](http://www.ssa.gov/pgm/ssi.htm) with very limited incomes and resources, and replaced a hodge-podge of federal and state programs designed to provide support to the poor and disabled.

In signing the act into law, President Nixon observed that citizens getting benefits under these programs were [“subject to great inequities and considerable red tape inherent in the present system of varying State programs with different benefits, eligibility standards, and rules.”](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/poverty/report/2012/09/10/37115/maintaining-and-strengthening-supplemental-security-income-for-children-with-disabilities/) The SSI program eliminated the need for this patchwork of programs, replacing it with a single federal program to provide income assistance to the poor and disabled.

Advocates for disabled children also celebrate SSI as a program that [changed the paradigm for caring for children with disabilities.](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/poverty/report/2012/09/10/37115/maintaining-and-strengthening-supplemental-security-income-for-children-with-disabilities/) The payment of benefits to disabled children has allowed many families to move away from the practice of institutionalizing their children, allowing them to instead provide care within the home. Advocates cite this change as beneficial to children and their families, and as economically beneficial as well, eliminating the costs of institutionalized care in many cases.

As a whole, SSI represents an important part of the social safety net for our most vulnerable citizens: children, the disabled, and the elderly. If illness is preventing you from working, you may qualify for benefits under this program.

For a free disability consultation, call Keefe Disability Law at (800) 776-2929.