Marriage Penalty Information

1. A video about the Marriage Penalty By SANYS of New York
2. Information about the Marriage Penalty
3. Advocacy from Maine self-advocates

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This video was made by self advocacy from New York City

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPqo0V9BGD8

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SSI Marriage Penalty Video - Advocacy From New York

We are self advocates from New York State. We are asking you to get the Social Security rules changed from the way they stand now for all people that receive benefits. Some of us are fortunate in the fact that we are employed and do not require SSI benefits at this time. Some of us who receive benefits and are afraid to fall in love or if we fall in love, we are afraid to get married. We are afraid to get married, because we will lose benefits that we need to survive.

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Society tells people that they need the benefits to survive. This is true in most cases. However, that is only because of the fear of what if there is no desire for them to rock the boat. You might think that this issue is not important at the moment and I understand that. I am just asking you to explore the possibility that all persons in the United States of America are equal.
I know that you have heard this before, but I think it is time for a change. If things change it will empower people to dream what they are afraid to dream, because people in society continue to perpetuate the stereotype that we are here to take care of you and you need not worry about things such as love and marriage.
Kile Pelletier and Jon McGovern

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What is the SSI Marriage Penalty?
If two people who get SSI get married, their SSI checks are decreased. They each get 25% less money.
For example:
Rich and Merle are both on SSI. When they were single they each got $794 per month. Rich and Merle get married. Their SSI changes to $595.50 per month. The Marriage Penalty means both are getting about $200 taken out of their SSI check.
What is the SSI Marriage Penalty?
- The marriage penalty does not happen to retired people that get social security. It does not happen for people who are on SSDI.
- **BEWARE** - If you live with someone and the community sees you as basically married, Social Security can deem you as married and reduce your benefits.
What is the SSI Marriage Penalty?

- Single people can have up to $2,000 in the bank; married people can only have $3,000 in the bank.
- Many people believe this government policy discriminate against people with disabilities.
- It is an example of ABLEISM which means unfair treatment of disabled people.
- The marriage penalty does not allow people with disabilities to enjoy the same joys of life as people without disabilities.

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A BILL To amend title XVI of the Social Security Act to provide that the supplemental security income benefits of adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities shall not be reduced by reason of marriage.

This Bill introduced on 2/3/2021 can make a difference in our lives are:

- **US HR761**
  - MAPSA Act Marriage Access for People with Special Abilities Act

John Katko (R) - New York

Bill Keating (D) - Massachusetts
Bill in Congress

- The **MAPSA Act** would end the marriage penalty for individuals with disabilities. It changes the rules for how SSI decides how much money a person with IDD gets from SSI. They will only look at the income and resources of the person. They will not include the income and resources of their spouse.

- This is fair because living an IDD is very expensive. A person who gets SSI has unique personal care needs and medical expenses to live in their communities.
So why is this Bill stuck and not getting passed?

Kile and Jon are asking more disability groups to speak up about why it is important for people with disabilities to have equal chance to getting married.

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