



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

July 14, 2015

The Honorable Orin Hatch
Chair
Senate Finance Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member,
Senate Finance Committee
U. S. Senate
Washington DC 20510

Dear Chairman Hatch and Ranking Member Wyden:

On behalf of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD), we urge Congress to act this year to make permanent key provisions of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and refundable Child Tax Credit (CTC). Congress should also use this opportunity to improve the EITC by expanding it for low-income childless adults and non-custodial parents who could benefit from the change. CCD is a coalition of national disability organizations working together to advocate for national public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

The EITC and CTC are effective in helping working families escape poverty and achieve greater self-sufficiency. Together, they lifted 9.4 million people out of poverty— and made 22 million others less poor – in 2013. Effective tools to help lift individuals and families out of poverty are particularly important to people with disabilities. According to Census data, in 2013 the poverty rate for people with disabilities was 28.7%, significantly higher than the poverty rate for people without disabilities.

If Congress lets critical provisions of these credits expire at the end of 2017, some *50 million Americans*, including 25 million children, will lose part or all of their tax credits — and more than 16 million people, including almost 8 million children, will fall into or deeper into poverty. According to research by the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, 15% of all families that would lose some or all of their CTC or EITC include one or more people with a disability and about 400,000 workers with a disability would be directly impacted by losing some or all of their CTC or EITC.

Congress should also address the significant gap in coverage of the EITC and cover low-wage childless workers (workers who don't claim dependent children). In 2013, roughly 8 million such workers were taxed into or deeper into poverty, in part because of an inadequate EITC. Closing

the large gap in the EITC for childless adults and non-custodial parents would significantly help 1.3 million workers with a disability, or about 10 percent of workers who would benefit.

As Congress considers tax proposals this year that would help business and other interests, it should not leave low-wage workers and their families behind. Instead, it should make these critical EITC and CTC provisions permanent and plug the gap in the EITC for childless workers. We urge Congress to act now to extend and improve the EITC. Thank you for considering our views. If you have any questions or would like more information please contact Julie Ward (ward@thearc.org).

On behalf of:

ACCSES

American Association of People with Disabilities

American Association on Health and Disability

American Foundation for the Blind

American Network of Community Options and Resources

Amputee Coalition

Association of University Centers on Disabilities

Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

Brain Injury Association of America

Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation

Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund

Easter Seals

Epilepsy Foundation

Family Voices

Institute for Educational Leadership

Lutheran Services in America Disability Network

Mental Health America

National Alliance on Mental Illness

National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities

National Association of State Head Injury Administrators

National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare

National Council on Independent Living

National Disability Institute

National Down Syndrome Congress

National Down Syndrome Society

National Respite Coalition

Paralyzed Veterans of America

SourceAmerica

The Advocacy Institute

The Arc of the United States

The Jewish Federations of North America

United Spinal Association

CC: Members, U.S. Senate