



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

September 22, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
235 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Majority Leader
United States House of Representatives
1705 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable George Miller
Chair, Committee on Education and Labor
United States House of Representatives
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Chair, Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
2204 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael McMahon
Representative
United States House of Representatives
323 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Pelosi, Hoyer, Miller, Waxman and McMahon:

The undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Education Task Force are writing to thank you for your commitment to individuals with disabilities and are pleased to offer our strong support for Rosa's Law.

This important legislation would basically remove variations of the term 'mental retardation' from all Federal laws and replace it with variations of the term 'intellectual disability.' This change would bring Federal law in line with current practice and eliminate a term, which over time has become demeaning to individuals with and without disabilities.

Although the term 'mental retardation' was originally used to describe individuals with cognitive impairments, improvements in our understanding of cognitive disabilities, and the negative connotation the term acquired over time, led the field to adopt the more accurate term

‘intellectual disability.’ Thus, the American Psychiatric Association, the Federal Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of the President of the United States, and the health arm of the United Nations all now use the term ‘intellectual disability.’ Federal law should be no different; passing Rosa’s law will make this needed change.

Rosa’s law enjoyed strong support in the Senate, passing by unanimous consent. Its companion bill in the House, H.R. 4544, the Elizabeth A. Connolly Act, introduced by Representative McMahan, enjoys the support of 69 cosponsors. As a companion bill, this legislation’s main purpose would be fulfilled if Rosa’s law passed the House. Therefore, we are pleased that the full House of Representatives will have a chance to vote on Rosa’s law this week, and we applaud you for your leadership on legislation that will cultivate a healthy atmosphere of learning in our nation’s schools and provide the dignity and respect all people deserve.

Sincerely,

American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

American Counseling Association

Association of University Centers on Disabilities

Autism National Committee

Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

Council for Exceptional Children

Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Inc.

Easter Seals

Hellen Keller National Center

Learning Disabilities Association of America

National Association of Private Special Education Centers

National Association of School Psychologists

National Association of State Directors of Special Education

National Center for Learning Disabilities

National Coalition on Deaf-Blindness

National Disability Rights Network

National Down Syndrome Society

National PTA

School Social Work Association of America

TASH

The Arc

United Cerebral Palsy

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities is a coalition of nearly 100 national consumer, advocacy, provider and professional organizations headquartered in Washington, D.C. Since 1973, the CCD has advocated on behalf of people of all ages with physical and mental

disabilities and their families. CCD has worked to achieve federal legislation and regulations that assure that the 54 million children and adults with disabilities are fully integrated into the mainstream of society. For additional information, please contact:

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