March 18, 2019

Representative Brett Guthrie
2434 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Debbie Dingell
116 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Guthrie and Representative Dingell:

The undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Long-Term Services & Supports (LTSS) Task Force write to express our strong support for the EMPOWER Care Act (H.R. 1342) to reauthorize the Money Follows the Person (MFP) Medicaid demonstration program for five more years. Reauthorizing MFP for a significant period of time is the top priority of the disability and aging communities.

CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

While Congress has made great bipartisan strides in ensuring persons with disabilities can be integrated into their communities, systematic biases still exist that favor more costly institutional care over home and community-based services (HCBS). MFP follows in that proud history of passing bipartisan legislation to ensure that individuals with disabilities can live in the setting of their choice.

First authorized in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, with strong bipartisan support and signed into law by President George W. Bush, the MFP has helped more than 88,000 older adults (CMS, 2018) and people with disabilities — nearly one-third of them older adults — transition out of nursing homes and other institutional settings back to living in their communities.

MFP has also enabled at least 43 states and the District of Columbia to develop the needed infrastructure to enhance people’s access to home and community-based services (HCBS), while helping states shift more of their resources to HCBS and reduce expenditures on more expensive institutional services.

We thank you both for your longstanding and vocal commitment to promoting community living for both people with disabilities and older adults. We look forward to working with you to pass this incredibly important legislation.

Sincerely,

Allies for Independence
American Association of People with Disabilities
American Association on Health and Disability