May 6, 2013

The Honorable John Kline  
Chairman  
Education & the Workforce Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable George Miller  
Ranking Member  
Education & the Workforce Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kline and Ranking Member Miller,

On behalf of the undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, we write to ask for your leadership to protect the safety of children in our schools today.

The Keeping All Students Safe Act will establish national minimum standards for the use of restraint and seclusion in schools, strengthening protections in every state and ensuring the safety of all students and school personnel. The bills will ensure that restraint and seclusion are used only in emergencies threatening physical safety. The bills also promote a shift toward preventing problematic behavior through the use of de-escalation techniques, conflict management and evidence-based positive behavioral interventions and supports. This shift of focus will help school personnel understand the needs of their students and safely address the source of challenging behaviors – a better result for everyone in the classroom.

The use of restraint and seclusion is widespread. Data from the U.S. Department of Education shows that nearly 40,000 students were physically restrained during the 2009-2010 school year, with about 70% of those students being students with disabilities. Our nation’s children deserve better. Legislation to protect our nation’s children has been languishing for the past four years. Our organizations want to work with the Education and Workforce Committee to move restraint and seclusion legislation forward NOW. We need more than the current patchwork of state laws to ensure that every child is afforded protection.

We applaud you for your efforts and leadership. We look forward to working with you on this important issue. Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

ACCSES  
Adaptive Physical Activity Council  
ADHD Aware  
American Association of People with Disabilities  
American Association on Health and Disability  
American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities  
American Dance Therapy Association  
American Music Therapy Association  
American Network of Community Options and Resources  
American Therapeutic Recreation Association  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Autism National Committee
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. Approximately 50 national organizations participate in the CCD Education Task Force. For additional information, please contact:

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