



October 9, 2012

Dear Senator:

The undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) urge you to adhere to the attached principles as the debate continues over what form deficit reduction should take. We recognize that there are many difficult decisions that must be made regarding deficit reduction before the end of the year. We request that you support our goal of developing a balanced approach to resolving the nation's deficit and thereby avoid irreparable harm to our most vulnerable citizens.

CCD believes that:

- The budget should be balanced without detriment to people with disabilities, for whom government services and supports are vital to their ability to remain healthy, employed, educated and independent in their communities.
- Any modifications to entitlement programs on which people with disabilities depend for their health, long-term supports and income security as their lifeline, such as Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income and veterans disability compensation and pension benefits, must not result in reduced access to needed services either directly, through eligibility restrictions or benefit cuts, or indirectly, through inadequate provider reimbursement rates.
- Deficit reduction strategies must reflect a thoughtful, balanced approach and include all aspects of the federal budget in order to protect people with disabilities. Any plan must include an analysis of how it will impact people with disabilities of all ages and other vulnerable populations.

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities is a broad coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for national public policy that ensures the education, self determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

We look forward to working with you through the process ahead and appreciate your attention to our concerns. If you have questions, please contact Jennifer Dexter (jdexter@easterseals.com or 202-347-2066). Thank you.

Sincerely,

American Association of People with Disabilities
American Association on Health and Disability
American Dance Therapy Association
American Music Therapy Association
American Network of Community Options and Resources
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
American Therapeutic Recreation Association
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Autism National Committee
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Brain Injury Association of America
Council for Exceptional Children
Council for Learning Disabilities
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children
Easter Seals
Epilepsy Foundation
Goodwill Industries International
Health and Disability Advocates
IDEA Infant Toddler Coordinators Association
Inter-National Association of Business, Industry and Rehabilitation (I-NABIR)
Learning Disabilities Association of America
Lutheran Services in America Disability Network
Mental Health America
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Alliance to End Homelessness
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
National Council on Aging
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Down Syndrome Society
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives
National Respite Coalition
Paralyzed Veterans of America
School Social Work Association of America
The Advocacy Institute
The Arc of the United States
The Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation
The Special Needs Coalition
Tourette Syndrome Association
United Cerebral Palsy
United Spinal Association