



March 29, 2021

The Honorable Julia Brownley
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Brownley:

The undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Veterans Task Force and Health Care Task Force thank you for introducing H.R. 1801, the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) Children's Care Protection Act. CCD is a coalition of more than 100 national disability rights, advocacy, consumer, provider and self-advocates organizations representing the more than 61 million Americans with disabilities. The Veterans Task Force concerns itself with issues affecting veterans with disabilities and the Health Care Task Force strives to highlight issues within the U.S. health care system that impact individuals with disabilities.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) required private-sector health plans to allow young people to stay on their parents' insurance until the age of 26, but this coverage was not extended to military or veteran health coverage at the time of the health care law's passage. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2011 increased dependent coverage under the military health care program, TRICARE, up to age 26 to make it consistent with the ACA. As a result, the only dependents that are not covered under a parent's health insurance policy up to age 26 are those of 100 percent service-connected disabled veterans covered under CHAMPVA. Currently, a child of a veteran loses eligibility for CHAMPVA at the age of 23 if they are a student or at the age of 18 otherwise. The CHAMPVA Children's Care Protection Act would fix this loophole for the VA's CHAMPVA program.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed numerous inequities in the health care system and revealed how essential health care coverage is for so many Americans. These young people should not be excluded from the health coverage protections afforded to all other young adults under current law. Passage of this measure would be particularly crucial to young people who have been unable to finish college or lost their jobs as a result of the economic disruption caused by the pandemic.

We deeply appreciate your attention to this pressing issue and look forward to swift passage of the CHAMPVA Children's Care Protection Act.

Please feel free to contact the cochairs of the CCD Veterans Task Force if you have any questions – Ken Greenberg, VetsFirst – kgreenberg@vetsfirst.org, Susan Prokop, Paralyzed Veterans of America – susanp@pva.org.

Sincerely,

American Association on Health and Disability
American Music Therapy Association (AMTA)
American Physical Therapy Association
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Center for Disability Rights
Center for Public Representation
Center for Reproductive Rights
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
Coalition for Disability Health Equity
CommunicationFIRST
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF)
Easterseals
Epilepsy Foundation
Family Voices
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy and Community Empowerment
National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Paralyzed Veterans of America
RespectAbility
The Arc of the United States
United Spinal Association
U.S. International Council on Disabilities
VetsFirst

Cc: The Honorable Mark Takano, Chairman, House Committee on Veterans Affairs
The Honorable Mike Bost, Ranking Member, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs