



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

December 10, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
House Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
House Majority Leader
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
House Minority Whip
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chairman
Energy & Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Energy & Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Brett Guthrie
Representative
Energy & Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Debbie Dingell
Representative
Energy & Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives

Dear Speaker Ryan, Minority Leader Pelosi, Majority Leader McCarthy, Minority Whip Hoyer, Chairman Walden, Ranking Member Pallone, Rep. Guthrie and Rep. Dingell:

The undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Long-Term Services & Supports (LTSS) Task Force urge you to pass H.R. 7217 to reauthorize the Medicaid Money Follows the Person Demonstration Project (MFP) before the end of the 115th Congress.

Reauthorizing MFP is the top priority of the disability and aging communities to get done before the end of the 115th Congress. Beyond the potential harms to persons with disabilities and older adults that would occur if MFP was not reauthorized, we also anticipate disruption, confusion, and new administrative burdens on states.

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.

As the nation mourns the loss of President George H.W. Bush, we remember him for championing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to end, in his words, “the shameful wall of exclusion” so that “every man, woman, and child with a disability can now pass through once-closed doors into a bright new era of equality, independence, and freedom.”

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 are able to 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.

According to CMS, 12 states have already exhausted their allotted MFP funding and the remaining state MFP programs will do so as well by December 31, 2018. As a result, states are transitioning fewer individuals and the progress we have made due to MFP in supporting people with disabilities in their communities is at risk, including compromised quality of life and health outcomes for beneficiaries, key staff layoffs at the state and provider levels, and loss of badly needed state Medicaid infrastructure.

We greatly appreciate your consideration of our request. We look forward to working with you to extend MFP before the end of the year.

Sincerely,

Allies for Independence
American Association of People with Disabilities
American Association on Health and Disability
American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
American Civil Liberties Union
American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR)
American Physical Therapy Association
American Psychological Association
American Therapeutic Recreation Association
The Arc of the United States
Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE)
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Autism Society of America
Autism Speaks
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Brain Injury Association of America
Center for Public Representation
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
Easterseals
Epilepsy Foundation

The Jewish Federations of North America
Justice in Aging
Lutheran Services in America Disability Network
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD)
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
National Council on Aging
National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Health Law Program
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Respite Coalition
Paralyzed Veterans of America
Special Needs Alliance
TASH, Inc.
United Spinal Association