



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

June 1, 2015

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
United States Congress
233 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Appointment to the US Election Assistance Commission Board of Advisors

Dear Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Rights Task Force, we write to urge you to appoint Michelle Bishop to the Board of Advisors to the United States Election Assistance Commission (EAC).

Ms. Bishop is extremely well qualified for an appointment to the Board of Advisors. She currently serves as the Voting Rights Specialist at the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN), the nonprofit membership organization for the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) systems for individuals with disabilities. Ms. Bishop coordinates activity in the Protection and Advocacy for Voter Access (PAVA) program, established by the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) to address the voting system barriers faced by people with disabilities.

Ms. Bishop provides training and technical assistance to the nationwide network of P&A agencies regarding voting rights and access for voters with disabilities at the state level, while advocating for effective elections administration policies at the national level. Her work at NDRN has allowed her to collaborate closely with the EAC on critical issues that will continue to impact voter access, such as the development of new voter processing technologies and creating a new set of accessibility and usability standards through the Voluntary Voting System Guidelines (VVSG).

Previously, Ms. Bishop worked as the Assistant Director of Public Policy & Advocacy at Paragard Center for Independent Living in St. Louis, where she led statewide activities to ensure voter access, protect voting rights, increase voter registration, and expand non-partisan voter education and get out the vote programs for eight years. Her work at both the state and national level and for multiple cross-disability organizations have

given her the knowledge and expertise to address the barriers people with disabilities encounter while casting a ballot, regardless of the type of disability (visual, auditory, physical, cognitive, etc.).

Based on her deep expertise with respect to the voting rights of individuals with disabilities, Ms. Bishop would make a stellar addition to the Board of Advisors. Moreover, it is critical that the Board contain sufficient representation of individuals familiar with the concerns of people with disabilities in the voting process. As Congress recognized in the Help America Vote Act, there is an important need to “ensure the full participation in the electoral process for individuals with disabilities, including registering to vote, casting a vote, and accessing polling places.” Ms. Bishop’s appointment to the Board of Advisors would help ensure that this need is addressed by the EAC.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Mathis
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law



Mark Richert
American Foundation for the Blind



Dara Baldwin
National Disability Rights Network



Sandy Finucane
Epilepsy Foundation of America



Samantha Crane
Autistic Self Advocacy Network

Co-chairs, CCD Rights Task Force