April 22, 2021

Hon. Cory Booker     Hon. Tom Cotton
Chair       Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism      Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism
Senate Judiciary Committee    Senate Judiciary Committee
717 Hart Senate Office Bldg.        124 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510     Washington, DC 20510

Re: Subcommittee on Criminal Justice Hearing on Behavioral Health and Policing

Dear Chair Booker and Ranking Member Cotton:

As co-chairs of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Rights Task Force, we write to applaud you for conducting a hearing on this important topic. 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.

The negative and often deadly consequences of police interactions with people with disabilities, and particularly Black, Indigenous and People of Color with disabilities, have raised significant concerns in the disability community. We are encouraged to see that the subcommittee is addressing the issue of police responses to individuals with behavioral health needs. We write to share the CCD Rights Task Force’s attached statement of principles concerning police responses to people with disabilities. We note that this statement also conveys support for additional policing reforms including many of those included in the Justice in Policing Act.

Thank you for your attention to these critically important issues.
Sincerely,

Jennifer Mathis  
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

Kelly Buckland  
National Council on Independent Living

Stephen Lieberman  
United Spinal Association

Samantha Crane  
Autistic Self Advocacy Network

Allison Nichol  
Epilepsy Foundation

Molly Burgdorf  
The Arc of the United States

Co-chairs, CCD Rights Task Force