



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

July 20, 2006

Dear Senator,

We, the undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD), are writing to respectfully urge you NOT to support S. 3521, the “Stop Over-Spending Act of 2006” or another other legislation that contains provisions such as those outlined below that would have irreversible negative implications for health and human services programs that support people with disabilities and other vulnerable populations to lead healthy lives and contribute to their communities.

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

If passed this dangerous legislation would:

- Place caps on funding for discretionary programs that would force cuts in every domestic discretionary program that provides the support that people with disabilities need to live and work in the community.
- Set fixed deficit targets that would be enforced by automatic across-the-board cuts in all entitlement programs except Social Security.
- Congress would lose substantial power in its role in checks and balances and its ability to be responsive to the needs of their constituents with disabilities and their allies. The bill would grant the President the power to eliminate or scale back any expansion to the domestic and entitlement programs, such as Medicaid, Medicare and other programs that support people with disabilities and their families to live and work in the community.
- The CCD is also especially troubled with the sunset commission provision that is a highly extraordinary departure from longstanding rules designed to ensure bi-partisan deliberation and sound policymaking, and to maintain the delicate balance between the authorities of the legislative and executive branch. With its recommendations “fast-tracked,” Congress and the committees of jurisdiction would be left with just a single up or down vote, potentially involving hundreds of programs impacting

education, employment, transportation and other programs upon which people with disabilities rely to be independent and productive in the community.

- Finally, while many of us are also troubled by the growing and persistent national deficit, we believe this legislation is one-sided and does not represent sound fiscal policy. The PAYGO provision would prevent increased spending for entitlement programs without offsetting the spending by cutting other entitlement programs or increasing revenues. While establishing procedures that could trigger substantial cuts to programs for people with disabilities and other low-income individuals and families, this bill would completely shield tax cuts from the PAYGO provisions. This represents a fundamental change to the original 1990 PAYGO law and puts virtually all of the burden of deficit reduction on domestic programs on which so many people facing challenging situations rely.

Because of these ill-conceived provisions that we believe are not well-understood, we urge you to withdraw or refrain from supporting the Stop Over-Spending Act or from supporting other legislation containing any of these provisions.

Thank you for your consideration of this request,

American Association of People with Disabilities
American Counseling Association
American Network of Community Options and Resources
APSE: The Network on Employment
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Brain Injury Association of America
Easter Seals
Epilepsy Foundation
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Disability Rights Network
National Respite Coalition
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Rehabilitation Association
The Arc of the United States
United Cerebral Palsy
United Spinal Association