



June 30, 2004

Dear Senator:

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) is writing to express our strong support for the concurrent resolution (S.CON.RES.52) urging the involvement of the United States Government in a United Nations Convention on the human rights and dignity of people with disabilities. CCD is a coalition of over 100 national disability organizations that advocates on behalf of the 54 million people with disabilities in the United States and their families. As the world moves on its path toward peaceful development, it is critical to ensure that people with disabilities anywhere in the world are not left behind in the process. We strongly believe that our nation must participate in the Ad Hoc committee established by the UN in 2001 to consider a comprehensive and integral treaty to protect and promote the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities. Considering that the next meeting of the UN Ad Hoc Committee will take place on August 23, 2004, we urge you to co-sponsor the resolution and urge the leaders of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to move this S.CON.RES.52 to the floor for a vote.

There are currently 600,000,000 people with disabilities world-wide, many of whom reside in developing countries that cannot provide for their needs, or worse, keep them in sub-human conditions comparable to the abuse and neglect which occurred in the United State before the disability advocacy movement took hold. The United States, being an emulated leader in the cause for people with disabilities through the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), must take an active role in ensuring the globalization of those principles.

Under the provisions of the resolution the United States would play a leading role in the drafting of the Convention. This would ensure that the principles of the ADA are employed in protecting the rights and dignity of people with disabilities. More importantly, the individuals who will be sent to represent the United States would include recognized leaders within the disability rights movement.

We recognize all of the efforts that the Senate has made in helping citizens with disabilities; we now ask that you help people beyond our borders. Therefore, we once again urge you to support the passage of resolution S.CON.RES.52. It is crucial to improving the lives of people with disabilities in other nations.

Sincerely,

Adapted Physical Activity Council (APAC)  
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)  
American Association on Health and Disability  
American Association on Mental Retardation  
American Congress of Community Supports and Employment Services  
American Council of the Blind  
American Counseling Association  
American Dance Therapy Association  
American Foundation for the Blind (AFB)  
American Network of Community Option and Resources (ANCOR)  
American Psychological Association  
APSE: The Network on Employment  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law  
Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA)  
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)  
Council for Exceptional Children  
Council for Learning Disabilities  
Council of Parent Attorney and Advocates (COPAA)  
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, Inc. (DREDF)  
Easter Seals  
Enable America  
Epilepsy Foundation  
Family Voices  
Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health  
Goodwill Industries International, Inc.  
Helen Keller National Center (HKNC)  
International Association of Business, Industry and Rehabilitation (I-NABIR)  
International Dyslexia Association (IDA)  
Learning Disabilities Association (LDA)  
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)  
National Association for the Advancement of Orthotics and Prosthetics  
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities  
National Association of Protection and Advocacy Systems (NAPAS)  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Coalition on Deaf-Blindness  
National Down Syndrome Congress  
National Fragile X Foundation  
National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty  
National Mental Health Association  
National Organization on Disability  
National Respite Coalition  
National Structured Settlements Trade Association  
Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA)  
Research Institute for Independent Living (RIIL)  
Spina Bifida Association of America (SBAA)  
The Arc of the United States  
United Cerebral Palsy  
World Institute on Disability

