



May 10, 2017

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States Senate
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act, S. 1028

Dear Senator Collins and Senator Baldwin:

The undersigned members of the Developmental Disabilities, Autism, and Family Support Task Force of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) write to express our support for your bipartisan legislation, the Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act (S. 1028). We greatly appreciate your leadership in helping our nation's millions of family caregivers.

CCD is a coalition of national disability-related organizations working together to advocate for national public policy that ensures full equality, self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. Our membership includes organizations that represent individuals with a range of genetic, developmental, and acquired conditions.

Caregiver responsibilities for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities are frequently substantial and last for several decades. These family caregivers provide assistance with activities such as eating, bathing, dressing, transportation, managing finances, administering medications, and coordinating care among multiple providers and settings. According to The Arc's Family and Individual Needs for Disability Supports (FINDS) survey, family caregivers often provide more than 40 hours of care per week (including 40% of surveyed family caregivers who provided more than 80 hours of care per week).

The RAISE Family Caregivers Act would implement the federal Commission on Long-Term Care's bipartisan recommendation that Congress require the development of a national strategy to support family caregivers. This strategy will include actions that the federal government, state and local governments, communities, healthcare, long-term services and supports and other providers, employers, and others can take to assist family caregivers.

We also appreciate that the bill provides for an advisory council to help develop the national strategy in an effective way. This council will include representation from diverse stakeholders such as family caregivers, older adults with long-term needs, persons with disabilities, advocates for caregivers and those with care needs, and health care and social service providers, among others.

By supporting our family caregivers, we can help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live at home and avoid unwanted and more costly institutionalization. We look forward to working with you to help pass the RAISE Family Caregivers Act.

Sincerely,

ACCSES

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Network of Community Options and Resources

Association of University Centers on Disabilities

Autism Society

Family Voices

Lutheran Services in America Disability Network

National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities

National Association of State Directors of Special Education

National Disability Rights Network

Parent to Parent USA

The Arc of the United States

United Cerebral Palsy