



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

CCD Statement on the Loss of Senator Ted Kennedy



The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) and all persons with disabilities, their families, friends and other supporters feel the profound loss of our great legislative champion.

For nearly a half century, Senator Kennedy fought tirelessly for the rights and well being of all citizens, particularly those with the least political power – people with disabilities, children, the poor, and the uninsured.

Senator Kennedy used his tremendous talent, energy, and dedication to bring about fundamental advances in federal disability policy. He was instrumental in passing almost every major piece of legislation to advance the civil rights, health, education, and economic security of the American people

He played a key role in the passage of Public Law 94-142 in 1975 (now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) which gave every student with a disability the right to a free appropriate public education. In the rights arena, his most notable achievement was the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990. Some of his other major accomplishments that helped people with disabilities enter the mainstream of our society include the Fair Housing Act, the Voting Rights Act, the Developmental Disabilities Act, and extensions of the Rehabilitation Act, including the addition of Supported Employment, and steady increases in the minimum wage.

Last Congress he co-authored the Higher Education Opportunity Act which, for the first time in Federal law, will afford higher education opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities. He also co-sponsored the Genetic Information Non Discrimination Act which prohibits discrimination for health insurance and employment. Most recently, Senator Kennedy devoted himself to health care

reform, including passage of the Community Choice Act and the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS Act).

Senator Kennedy was able to get so much landmark legislation passed by working in a truly bipartisan and collegial manner, nurturing a remarkably capable and loyal staff, mastering complex policy issues, and working fiercely of behalf of those he cared for most. For this he earned enduring respect from his colleagues, staff, and constituents alike.

Many CCD member organizations have had the great privilege of working with Senator Kennedy throughout his long and impressive Senate career. "Our time with this great leader has now passed, but the impact of his many contributions will be felt for generations to come" stated CCD Chairperson Marty Ford.