



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

April 6, 2011

Dear Representative:

As Co-Chairs of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities' (CCD) Fiscal Policy Task Force, we urge you to oppose the 2012 budget proposal released by Chairman Ryan on April 5. This budget proposal would be devastating to people with disabilities because of the drastic reduction in services and supports that the discretionary budget cuts and caps that it calls for as well as the structural changes to entitlement programs like Medicaid and Medicare.

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities is a coalition of approximately 115 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.

Drastic cuts in programs serving people with disabilities will make it difficult to protect the vital safety net that has been built over the years to protect people with disabilities from impoverishment and isolation. These programs play a vital role in supporting independence for people with disabilities by providing healthcare, housing, transportation, education, employment, and other essential supports. It is important to note that many programs have been grossly under-funded, not coming close to addressing the current unmet needs. The economic challenges we have faced these past several years have only made a bad situation even more dire as demand for services and the cost of providing services increases.

CCD appreciates the urgency for the federal government to be fiscally responsible and bring our national economic situation into balance. At the same time, we know that people with disabilities disproportionately rely on government services to live, learn and work in their communities. These services assist many people with disabilities to live independently in the community avoiding costly institutional care and increasing the opportunities to work and pay taxes. These services were created by government because the private market place would not meet the unique needs of people with disabilities.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Dexter
Easter Seals

Donna Meltzer
Epilepsy Foundation

Kim Musheno
Association of University Centers on Disabilities