



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

October 6, 2016

Chair Orrin Hatch
Senate Finance Committee
104 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Ron Wyden
Senate Finance Committee
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Hatch and Ranking Member Wyden:

The undersigned member organizations of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Task Force are writing to express our support for reauthorizing the Money Follows the Person (MFP) program.

CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. To accomplish this, we believe that many more individuals must be transitioned to the community from institutional settings and current community-based resources must also be strengthened and expanded. MFP is a proven program that consistently results in more individuals supported in the community and an overall rebalancing of state systems.

MFP provides assistance, support and funding to help individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, individuals with physical disabilities, and older adults who want to transition to their own homes or a community residence instead of living in a facility. Since 2005, the program has assisted more than 51,000 people move out of institutions.

Despite strong bi-partisan support and its benefit to thousands of individuals, this crucial program is about to disappear. The funding for MFP expired on Sept 30, 2016. This means that fewer people will be able to move back into a community setting, and state progress and momentum to shift systems from institutional to more cost-effective home and community-based settings will be slowed.

Thorough research by the Kaiser Family Foundation and Mathematica clearly illustrate that MFP saves money, serves more people, and results in increased quality of life. In fact, MFP has proven to be a lynchpin in many states' deinstitutionalization strategy. As a result of MFP, 16 states have added transition programs to their LTSS rebalancing. Twenty-seven states have used MFP to strengthen and expand existing nursing facility diversion and/or other transition programs. States

reported leveraging MFP dollars and transition experience to strengthen ongoing rebalancing efforts, including other Medicaid HCBS options.

It is also important to note that the MFP program is not often used to transition people with mental illnesses into the community, partially because of statutory barriers, but also because the services available to MFP beneficiaries often do not include necessary services for people with mental illnesses. Further, states continue to report that the main barrier to maximizing the impact of the MFP program is the availability of affordable housing options for individuals leaving institutions. We encourage Congress to address these issues either in the current reauthorization or in the future.

We thank you for your longtime support for the disability community and your current efforts to reauthorize this critical program. We look forward to working with your offices to secure its passage. Please feel free to contact Sarah Meek, co-chair, at (202) 499-5831 or smeek@lutheranservices.org if you would like to discuss further.

Sincerely,

ACCSES

Advance CLASS

American Association of People with Disabilities

American Association on Health and Disability

American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR)

Association of University Centers on Disability

Autism Speaks

Autistic Self Advocacy Network

Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

Brain Injury Association of America

Center for Public Representation

Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation

Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund, Inc.

Easterseals

Jewish Federations of North America

Justice in Aging

Lutheran Services in America Disability Network

NASUAD

National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys

National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities

National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services

National Association of State Head Injury Administrators

National Council on Aging

National Disability Rights Network

National Down Syndrome Congress

National Health Law Program

National Multiple Sclerosis Society

National Respite Coalition

Paralyzed Veterans of America

Special Needs Alliance
The Arc of the United States
United Cerebral Palsy
United Spinal Association

Cc: Senate Finance Committee
Senate Leadership