



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

May 31, 2019

The Honorable Robert Casey
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Sen. Casey:

The undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Emergency Management Task Force and Long Term Services and Supports Task Force are pleased to support the Disaster Relief Medicaid Act (DRMA). CCD is a coalition of national disability rights, advocacy, consumer, provider and self-advocate organizations representing this nation's more than 61 million Americans with disabilities. The Long Term Services and Supports Task Force concerns itself with preserving and enhancing the vital programs under Medicaid that enable millions of people with disabilities to live and thrive in their communities. The Emergency Management Task Force follows issues that are critical to ensuring the survival of people with disabilities in natural and man-made disasters and the full inclusion of the disability community in recovering from disasters.

Over the past two decades, this nation has experienced increasingly catastrophic storms, wildfires, hurricanes, floods and other natural disasters. Thousands of people and their families have been forced from their homes in these events. Over one million people were compelled to evacuate from Louisiana to other states in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. The devastating stress of such circumstances is magnified for individuals and families of people with disabilities who rely on Medicaid's health care and long term services and supports. Being driven from one's home state by a disaster can result in the loss of access to important programs and benefits that enable people with disabilities to live and work in their communities. In many instances, the loss of access to their home and community based services has driven people with disabilities displaced by disasters into institutions.

Under the Disaster Relief Medicaid Act, individuals that are eligible for Medicaid and who must move to another state because of a disaster would be able to continue accessing their Medicaid supported services. States receiving designated Relief-Eligible Survivors would be provided with resources to support their Medicaid needs. The DRMA would also provide technical assistance and support to states to develop innovative best practices to respond to an influx of out-of-state individuals with disabilities and create a grant program to assist states in developing an emergency

response corps to provide home and community-based services. Of particular importance is the 100% federal match in resources going to the services provided to displaced individuals with disabilities to overcome any concerns that host state populations could be disadvantaged.

There are many other actions that need to be taken to ensure disability inclusive emergency preparedness and response at the federal, state and local levels. However, the Disaster Relief Medicaid Act is an important step in making sure that additional harm does not befall people with disabilities in the wake of major disasters.

American Association of People with Disabilities
American Association on Health and Disability
American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
American Physical Therapy Association
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Autism Society of America
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Brain Injury Association of America
Center for Public Representation
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF)
Jewish Federations of North America
Lutheran Services in America-Disability Network
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Council on Independent Living
National Down Syndrome Congress
Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
Paralyzed Veterans of America
Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies
The Arc of the United States
United Spinal Association