



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

December 12, 2017

The Honorable Sam Johnson, Chairman
The Honorable John B. Larson, Ranking Member
United States House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Social Security
Committee on Ways and Means
2018 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Johnson and Ranking Member Larson,

The undersigned organizations are pleased to provide this letter of endorsement for **H.R. 4547, the Strengthening Protections for Social Security Beneficiaries Act of 2017**. Our organizations are all members of the Social Security Task Force of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD). CCD is a coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration, and inclusion of the approximately 57 million children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. The CCD Social Security Task Force focuses on disability policy issues in the Title II disability programs and the Title XVI Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program.

We welcome this bipartisan legislation to improve and strengthen the Social Security Administration's (SSA) representative payee program. In our view, the focus of the representative payee program should always be on assisting the person in using their SSA benefits to meet their individual needs. One of the strengths of SSA's representative payee program has been its combination of flexibility and relative informality, which permits an individualized approach while avoiding a substantial administrative structure.

However, SSA must be ever vigilant in its oversight and monitoring of the representative payee program. This legislation proposes many important and needed changes that will streamline the program, as well as takes important steps to increase oversight of the representative payee program by funding the nationwide network of Protection and Advocacy systems to monitor how representative payees are administering the Social Security funds received by beneficiaries.

We trust that any administrative savings generated by the provisions of H.R. 4547 will be invested in SSA strengthening and improving the representative payee program. Congress must ensure that these new initiatives to enhance the representative payee program are adequately funded and staffed, so as not to further erode these or other agency services.

Thank you for your oversight of SSA's representative payee program and for your interest in strengthening this system on behalf of people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association on Health and Disability
American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR)
Autism Society of America
Easterseals
Justice in Aging
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA)
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of Disability Representatives
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Rights Network
National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives (NOSSCR)
The Arc of the United States