



April 2, 2014

Tom Harkin
Chairman, Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Chris Murphy
Senator
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin, and Senator Murphy:

On behalf of the undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, we write to ask for your leadership to protect the safety of children in our schools today.

The Keeping All Students Safe Act (S. 2036) will establish national minimum standards for the use of restraint and seclusion in schools, strengthening protections in every state and ensuring the safety of all students and school personnel. The bill will ensure that restraint is only in emergencies threatening physical safety, and prohibit the use of seclusion. The bill also promotes a shift toward preventing problematic behavior through the use of de-escalation techniques, conflict management and evidence-based positive behavioral interventions and supports. This shift of focus will help school personnel understand the needs of their students and safely address the source of challenging behaviors – a better result for everyone in the classroom. The bill will also require prompt notice to parents of restraint.

The use of restraint and seclusion is widespread. Data from the U.S. Department of Education shows that over 70,000 students were physically restrained, and over 37,000 students were secluded during the 2011-2012 school year, with about 75% of the students being restrained being students with disabilities. Our nation's children deserve better. Legislation to protect our nation's children has been languishing for the past five years. Our organizations want to work with the Health, Education, Labor and Pension Committee to move restraint and seclusion legislation forward NOW. We need more than the current patchwork of state laws to ensure that every child is afforded protection.

We applaud you for your efforts and leadership. We look forward to working with you on this important issue. Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

ACCSES
American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
American Association on Health and Disability
American Association of People with Disabilities
American Dance Therapy Association

American Music Therapy Association
 American Network of Community Options and Resources
 Association of University Centers on Disabilities
 Autism National Committee
 Autism Speaks
 Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
 Brain Injury Association of America
 Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf
 Council for Learning Disabilities
 Council of Parent Attorney and Advocates
 Disability Rights and Education Defense Fund
 Easter Seals
 Epilepsy Foundation
 Family Voices
 Higher Education Consortium for Special Education
 Institute for Educational Leadership
 Learning Disabilities Association
 National Alliance on Mental Illness
 National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
 National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
 National Center on Learning Disabilities
 National Council on Independent Living
 National Disabilities Rights Network
 National Down Syndrome Congress
 National PTA
 School Social Work Association
 Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children
 The Advocacy Institute
 The Arc of the United States
 Tourette Syndrome Association
 Union for Reform Judaism
 United Cerebral Palsy

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities is a coalition of nearly 100 national consumer, advocacy, provider and professional organizations headquartered in Washington, D.C. Since 1973, the CCD has advocated on behalf of people of all ages with physical and mental disabilities and their families. CCD has worked to achieve federal legislation and regulations that assure that the 54 million children and adults with disabilities are fully integrated into the mainstream of society. Approximately 50 national organizations participate in the CCD Education Task Force. For additional information, please contact:

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