



March 7, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Menendez
Chairman
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable James E. Risch
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Christopher Coons
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Senate Subcommittee on State, Foreign
Operations and Related Programs
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Senate Subcommittee on State, Foreign
Operations and Related Programs
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Chairmen Menendez and Coons and Ranking Members Risch and Graham,

The undersigned organizations of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) International Ad-Hoc Task Force and at-large membership urge the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations to provide \$20 million in funding as part of any emergency supplemental appropriations bill related to Ukraine. These funds would support disability-led organizations, civil society organizations and nongovernmental organizations with expertise in disability rights to protect people with disabilities in Ukraine and neighboring countries. These funds should ensure their full inclusion in international relief efforts. We also support providing an additional \$5 million in emergency supplemental funding to ensure children and adults with disabilities in institutions are identified, prevented from abandonment, given opportunities for family protection, reunification, and placement, and included in evacuation and refugee assistance where necessary.

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 free from racism, ableism, sexism, and xenophobia, as well as LGBTQ+ based discrimination and religious intolerance.

People with disabilities are subjected to disproportionate harm in situations of armed conflict. They can be left behind in the planning and evacuation efforts and are often unable to access emergency communications, medical aid, and humanitarian aid. We are concerned about the barriers faced by Ukrainian organizations of persons with disabilities as they work on a response, and the evacuation and protection of the over 100,000 individuals living in group homes, orphanages, psychiatric facilities, and institutions across the country. Their needs, and the voices of their disability-led organizations must be prioritized as Ukraine and the international community rushes to respond with humanitarian aid and other support (Nothing About Us Without Us!).

Of immediate concern is the lack of accessible vehicles available at no charge to transport Ukrainians with disabilities, their personal support providers and disability equipment and supplies to bordering countries, and requirements for people with disabilities and their male personal support attendants to provide documentation to cross borders. We are also concerned about their immediate needs once they have crossed the borders, and the challenges they face as organizations with limited resources generously attempt to assist them.

We urge the United States Congress and the responding Federal Agencies (Department of Defense, Department of State, USAID) to work together on addressing the protection and human rights of Ukrainians with disabilities during this urgent humanitarian crisis. Please contact Isabel Hodge at ihodge@usid.org and Marcie Roth at marcie@wid.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

Access Ready
Advocacy Institute
American Association of People with Disabilities
ANCOR
Autism Society of America
Autistic Advocacy Center
American Physical Therapy Association
APSE - Association of People Supporting Employment First
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Brain Injury Association of America
Center for Medicare Advocacy

Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
Council of Administrators of Special Education
Council for Learning Disabilities
Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Organization on Disability
Paralyzed Veterans of America
Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies
RespectAbility
TASH
The Arc of the United States
The Viscardi Center
United Cerebral Palsy
United Spinal Association
United States International Council on Disabilities
World Institute on Disability