



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

March 10, 2008

The Honorable John M. Spratt, Jr.
Chairman
House Budget Committee
207 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Spratt:

On behalf of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD), the undersigned organizations are writing to express our strong support for the FY 2009 Budget Resolution that was recently reported out of committee. The measure authorizes important discretionary spending increases for housing, health and education programs of great significance to the disability community. Furthermore, it rejects the Bush Administration's proposed cuts in the Medicaid and Medicare programs.

In addition, we are particularly pleased that the budget resolution includes a deficit neutral reserve fund that will allow for moratoria on a host of Medicaid regulations recently promulgated by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and enough funding in SCHIP and Medicaid to reach eligible children. It should be noted that persons with physical, cognitive, and developmental disabilities, traumatic brain injuries, youngsters in the foster care system, persons living with HIV/AIDS and individuals with serious mental illnesses rely upon several state optional Medicaid and SCHIP programs to finance an array of intensive community-based services and supports.

Unfortunately, using its regulatory power alone, CMS has chosen to launch an unprecedented assault on the rehabilitative services option, school-based administration and transportation services, and the Targeted Case Management (TCM) option that would cut these three programs by a combined total of \$7 billion over five years. In turn, these funding reductions threaten access to vital medical, social, and educational services.

Thus far, CCD has enjoyed broad bipartisan support in our efforts to stop these rules because we subscribe to a simple principle: the Medicaid program is a partnership involving the United States Congress, state governments, county and local governments and CMS. The federal government should not attempt to skirt the legislative process by imposing fiscal and policy decisions on its partners through administrative fiat.

The FY 2009 House Budget Resolution fully subscribes to that principle. Therefore, CCD strongly supports the legislation and we stand ready to assist you in passing this critically important measure.

On behalf of children and adults with disabilities and their families, thank you for your leadership. If you have any questions, please contact the CCD Health Task Force Co-Chairs: Liz Savage, The Arc and United Cerebral Palsy Disability Policy Collaboration (202-783-2229- savage@thedpc.org), Kathy McGinley, National Disability Rights Network (202-408-9514, Kathy.McGinley@ndrn.org or Peter Thomas, ACCSES, (202-466-6550).

Sincerely,

ACCSES

American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
American Association of People with Disabilities
American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
American Foundation for the Blind
American Music Therapy Association
American Network of Community Options and Resources
American Physical Therapy Association
APSE: The Network on Employment
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Autism Society of America
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Brain Injury Association of America
Child Welfare League of America
Children & Adults with Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD)
Council for Exceptional Children
Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation
Division for Early Children of the Council for Exceptional Children
Easter Seals
Epilepsy Foundation
IDEA Infant Toddler Coordinators Association
Inter-National Association of Business, Industry, and Rehabilitation
Learning Disabilities Association of America
Mental Health America
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors
National Association of Social Workers

National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Rehabilitation Association
National Respite Coalition
National Spinal Cord Injury Association
NISH
Research Institute for Independent Living
School Social Work Association of America
The Arc of the United States
The Advocacy Institute
Title II Community AIDS National Network
United Cerebral Palsy
United Spinal Association

Cc: Honorable Nancy Pelosi