



Commemorating 40 Years  
Of Disability Advocacy  
1973-2013

October 31, 2013

The Honorable Michelle Lujan Grisham  
United States House of Representatives  
214 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Grisham:

We the undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Veterans and Military Families Task Force are writing in support of the Veterans' Independent Living Enhancement Act (H.R. 3330), legislation you recently introduced to help ensure eligible veterans with significant service-connected disabilities have access to daily living training and rehabilitative supports to help them live independently and participate fully in their communities.

CCD is a coalition of national disability rights, advocacy, consumer, and provider organizations. The Veterans and Military Families Task Force follows issues of concern to veterans with disabilities and military family members with disabilities.

The Veterans and Military Families Task Force is committed to helping veterans with disabilities and military family members with disabilities access the services and supports they need to live and excel in their communities. That is why we are pleased that your legislation would remove an arbitrary cap on the number of eligible veterans who can receive services at one time through the independent living track of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program.

The independent living track was developed as a pilot program to help veterans with the most significant disabilities who were not immediately ready to pursue employment goals but would benefit from specialized supports, such as assistive technology, home modifications and health-related services, to help them achieve greater independence in their daily living. Unfortunately, the cap from the pilot program remained in place even after the independent living track was adopted into the VR&E program. With the VA anticipating growth in the VR&E program (FY 2014 Congressional Budget Justification), Congress must act quickly to remove the cap to prevent eligible veterans from being denied access to these critical independent living services.

Please let our Task Force know if we can assist you in advancing this measure through the legislative process. If you have any questions, please contact the co-chairs of the CCD Veterans and Military Families Task Force: Maynard Friesz (202-403-8345; [mfriesz@easterseals.com](mailto:mfriesz@easterseals.com)); Heather Ansley (202-556-2076, Ext. 7702; [hansley@vetsfirst.org](mailto:hansley@vetsfirst.org)); or Susan Prokop (202-416-7707; [susanp@pva.org](mailto:susanp@pva.org)).

Sincerely,

American Association on Health and Disability  
American Dance Therapy Association

1825 K Street, NW, Suite 1200 • Washington, DC 20006 • PH 202-783-2229 • FAX 202-783-8250 • [Info@c-c-d.org](mailto:Info@c-c-d.org) • [www.c-c-d.org](http://www.c-c-d.org)

American Music Therapy Association  
Easter Seals  
Mental Health America  
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators  
National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Special Needs Alliance  
VetsFirst, a program of United Spinal Association