



May 22, 2014

The Honorable Patty Murray
U.S. Senate
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
U.S. Senate
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
U.S. Senate
478 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Marco Rubio
U.S. Senate
284 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Murray, Blunt, Gillibrand and Rubio:

We the undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) are writing in support of the Caring for Military Children with Developmental Disabilities Act of 2014 (S. 2333), legislation you recently introduced to improve access to behavioral health services, including applied behavior analysis (ABA), for TRICARE beneficiaries with autism and other developmental disabilities.

CCD is a coalition of over 100 national consumer, service provider, and professional organizations which advocates on behalf of people with disabilities and chronic conditions and their families.

Behavioral intervention strategies, including ABA, are effective in developing skills, including language and communication, and improving functioning for people with developmental disabilities. Despite the proven and widely recognized benefits of these interventions, access to them remains difficult for TRICARE beneficiaries. Behavioral health services are often delayed, received at less than recommended levels, or not provided at all. S. 2333 works to correct these deficits.

Thank you for your leadership to improve access to behavioral health services for TRICARE beneficiaries with autism and other developmental disabilities. Please let us know how we can assist you in advancing this measure through the legislative process. If you have any questions, please contact any of the co-chairs of the CCD Veterans and Military Families Task Force and Autism, Developmental Disabilities, and Family Support Task Force listed below:

Veterans and Military Families Task Force Co-Chairs:

Heather Ansley, hansley@vetsfirst.org
Maynard Friesz, mfriesz@easterseals.com
Susan Prokop, susanp@pva.org

Autism, DD, & Family Support Co-Chairs:

Annie Acosta, acosta@thearc.org
Jill Kagan, jbkagan@verizon.net
Kim Musheno, kmusheno@aucd.org
Cindy Smith, cindy.smith@ndrn.org
Stuart Spielman, sspielman@autismspeaks.org

Sincerely,

ACCSES

American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association on Health and Disability
American Dance Therapy Association
American Network of Community Options and Resources
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Autism National Committee
Autism Society
Autism Speaks
Brain Injury Association of America
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children
Easter Seals
Higher Education Consortium for Special Education
IDEA Infant Toddlers Coordinators Association
Lutheran Services in America Disability Network
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of County Behavioral Health & Developmental Disability Directors
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Centers on Independent Living
National Council for Behavioral Health
National Council on Independent Living
National Down Syndrome Society
National PTA
Paralyzed Veterans of America
School Social Work Association of America
Teacher Education Division of CEC
The Arc of the United States
United Cerebral Palsy
VetsFirst, a program of United Spinal Association