



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

July 9, 2012

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

The Honorable Mike Enzi
Ranking Member
Health, Education, Labor & Pension
Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Harkin and Enzi:

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. 2020/ H.R. 1381) 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 bills will ensure that restraint and seclusion are used only in emergencies threatening physical safety. The bills also promote 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 use of restraint and seclusion is widespread. New data from the U.S. Department of Education shows that nearly 40,000 students were physically restrained during the 2009-2010 school year, with about 70% of those students being students with disabilities. Our nation's children deserve better. Legislation to protect our nation's children has been languishing for the past four 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 in authoring and promoting the Keeping All Students Safe Act. We look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

ACCSES

Adaptive Physical Activity Council
American Association of People with Disabilities
American Association on Health and Disability
American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
American Dance Therapy Association
American Music Therapy Association
American Network of Community Options and Resources
American Therapeutic Recreation Association
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Autism National Committee
Autism Speaks
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Brain Injury Association of America
Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
Conference of Educational Administrators for Schools and Programs for the Deaf
Council for Exceptional Children
Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Inc
Council on Learning Disabilities
Daniel Jordan Fiddle Foundation
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children
Easter Seals
Epilepsy Foundation
Family Voices
Health and Disability Advocates
Higher Education Consortium on Special Education
IDEA Infant and Toddler Coordinator Association
Institute for Education Leadership
Inter/National Association of Business, Industry and Rehabilitation
Learning Disabilities Association of America
Lutheran Services in America Disability Network
Mental Health America
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Down Syndrome Society
National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health
National Health Law Project

National PTA
National Rehabilitation Association
Research Institute for Independent Living
School Social Work Association of America
Teacher Education Division of the Council on 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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