



Commemorating 40 Years Of Disability Advocacy 1973-2013

March 28, 2013

The Honorable Al Green
U.S. House of Representatives
2201 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Green:

We the undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Veterans and Military Families Task Force and the CCD Housing Task Force are writing in support of the Housing Assistance for Veterans Act (HAVEN Act) of 2013 (H.R. 385). This legislation would provide grants to nonprofits that would increase their ability to help veterans who are disabled or low-income with required housing adaptations and repairs.

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

Veterans with disabilities must have access to affordable, accessible housing in order to be independent members of their communities. Although the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides some assistance to veterans who have disabilities that are connected to their military service and who have specific physical limitations, many veterans who need housing adaptations are not eligible for these benefits. Furthermore, many low-income veterans also need help with home repair assistance, which is not provided through VA.

CCD supports the HAVEN Act because it will increase the opportunities for veterans with disabilities or low-incomes to receive the assistance they need to return to or remain in their homes. The pilot program authorized by this legislation would allow the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide grants to nonprofits that will leverage the ability of these organizations to assist veterans with remodeling bathrooms to increase accessibility, fixing roofs, and other repairs and adaptations. The legislation also requires collaboration between HUD and VA to ensure that the pilot is meeting the needs of targeted veterans.

We commend your leadership in pursuing legislation that will assist veterans with disabilities. We stand ready to work in partnership with you to ensure passage of the HAVEN Act. If you have any questions, please contact Heather Ansley, co-chair of the CCD Veterans and Military Families Task Force, at (202) 556-2076, Ext. 7702 or by e-mail at hansley@vetsfirst.org.

Sincerely,

ACCSES
American Association on Health and Disability
Brain Injury Association of America
Easter Seals
Mental Health America
National Alliance on Mental Illness

National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Rights Network
Paralyzed Veterans of America
The Arc of the United States
Technical Assistance Collaborative
VetsFirst, a program of United Spinal Association
Vietnam Veterans of America