

# Collaboration to Promote Self-Determination

November 5, 2009

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Dear Congressmen:

As national organizations focused on improving the lives of people with significant disabilities, we would like to take this opportunity to respectfully request your leadership in ensuring that the Home and Community Balanced Incentives Act of 2009 (S. 1256) is included in the final health care reform package. We appreciate the efforts of the Senate Finance Committee to include the majority of the provisions outlined in S. 1256 in the America's Healthy Future Act of 2009, and want to make sure that this effort is maintained as the Senate completes work on a final health care reform package.

The Collaboration to Promote Self Determination (CPSD) seeks innovative public policy reform to promote employment first policies, effective transition strategies, meaningful asset development, and strong long-term supports and services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We urge inclusion of S.1256 in the final health care reform package currently being considered by Congress.

The CPSD is most grateful for the specific inclusion of the interests of individuals with complex cognitive, developmental and intellectual disabilities in the context of this legislation. Specifically, the CPSD supports the following provisions:

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- Providing new authority to states to begin making changes in organizing their HCBS systems to accomplish rapid balancing reforms.
- The provision of HCBS infrastructure grants for those states that have already moved a significant share of services to the HCBS sector, so that they can code their HCBS services and make related investments to support a broad HCBS services infrastructure.
- The strengthening of federal oversight of state HCBS systems, and the inclusion of the National Association of State Directors on Developmental Disabilities and Services (NASDDDS) in the list of organizations to be involved in this oversight process.

We greatly appreciate the efforts of both the Senate Special Committee on Aging and Senate Finance Committee to acknowledge the distinct needs of the intellectual and developmental disability community, and thus including language within S. 1256 that encourages and incentivizes states who are attempting to expand their home and community based services to support these individuals in integrated settings throughout the lifespan. This legislation will correct many of the bureaucratic barriers that states currently face in providing the right services and supports at the right time to help individuals with the most significant disabilities so that they may also actively engage and participate in their community in meaningful ways. We urge the House leadership to follow the lead of the Senate by supporting incorporation of S. 1256 into the final health care reform package, and appreciate in advance your careful consideration of this request.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that the key provisions and intent of this critical legislation is included in the final health care reform package. We encourage you and your staff to contact us at 202-548-2502 should you have any questions or would like additional information about the Collaboration to Promote Self-Determination.

Sincerely,

Association of Persons in Supported Employment (APSE)

Autism Society

National Association of State Directors on Developmental Disabilities and Services (NASDDDS)

National Down Syndrome Congress

National Down Syndrome Society

National Fragile X Foundation

