



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

March 23, 2022

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Leaders Schumer and McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy:

The undersigned organizations of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) write in support of fully funding the supplemental budget request for COVID-19 pandemic response. CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. When Congress recently passed the Omnibus Appropriations Act, funding for COVID-19 pandemic response efforts was not included. As the White House made clear in their budget request, this funding is necessary to continue crucial pandemic response work, including ensuring access to vaccines and boosters, testing and treating everyone including the uninsured, providing access to monoclonal antibodies treatments and preventative treatments for the immunocompromised, and surveillance of new variants.

The pandemic has taken a very real toll on people with disabilities and older adults, many of whom face higher risk of complications and death if exposed to the virus and have needed to isolate to protect themselves for the past two years. People with disabilities and older adults in congregate care settings have made up just under a quarter of all COVID-19 deaths. These impacts have been even more disproportionate for people of color with disabilities. Especially as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), states, and localities ease masking requirements, people with disabilities now face additional risks of exposure. Many of these changes to masking requirements were premised on the idea that basic pandemic response would continue, and especially that the live-saving monoclonal antibody treatments and preventative treatments would be widely available for people with disabilities who are at high risk.

Unfortunately, the lack of funding has put access to needed vaccines, boosters, and treatments at risk, just as we watch another variant spread in Europe that may shortly spread here. We ask you to move as

quickly as possible to fully fund the supplemental budget request and ensure the pandemic response can protect and support people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation
American Association of People with Disabilities
American Council of the Blind
American Foundation for the Blind
Association for University Centers on Disabilities
Autism Society of America
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network
CommunicationFIRST
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Epilepsy Foundation
The Jewish Federations of North America
Justice in Aging
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Council on Independent Living
National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Institute
National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
National Health Law Program
National Respite Coalition
RespectAbility
TASH
The Arc of the United States
World Institute on Disability