

### **Senate Examines Alternatives to Seclusion and Restraint in Schools**

SILVER SPRING, MD (July 12, 2012) — The Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) applauds the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee for holding a hearing on alternatives to restraint and seclusion in schools. Through this bipartisan hearing, Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Ranking Member Michael Enzi (R-WY), have shown their commitment to ensuring the safety of our nation’s students.

National data shows that restraint and seclusion use is widespread: nearly 40,000 students were physically restrained during the 2009-2010 school year, with about 70 percent being students with disabilities. Hispanic and African American students also disproportionately experience these techniques.

A 2009 report by the Government Accountability Office found that restraint and seclusion have resulted in injury, trauma and even death to students. School personnel are frequently injured when implementing restraint and seclusion, and other students who witness these techniques have also experienced trauma. Currently, no federal guidelines exist to regulate these dangerous techniques in schools, and the patchwork of state laws, regulations and non-binding guidance is simply not sufficient to ensure that all children are afforded baseline protections.

“The dangers of restraint and seclusion are well-documented,” stated Anthony Antosh, EdD, President of AUCD. “With so many alternatives available to successfully manage behavior and ensure a positive school climate, we shouldn’t wait another minute to establish national standards to protect students from these risky techniques.”

“Research from many of our University Centers shows that most problem behaviors could be prevented with early identification and alternatives such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports,” said George Jesien, PhD, AUCD’s Executive Director. “AUCD is pleased to see bipartisan interest in examining solutions to this national concern.”

AUCD strongly supports the Keeping All Students Safe Act (S. 2020, H.R. 1381) to establish national minimum standards to limit the use of restraint and seclusion in schools. AUCD looks forward to working with Congress to enact these long-overdue protections as soon as possible.

The Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), located in Silver Spring, MD, promotes and supports a national network of interdisciplinary centers on disabilities. The members of AUCD represent every U.S. state and territory. AUCD and its members work to advance policy and practice through research, education, leadership, and services for and with individuals with developmental and other disabilities, their families, and communities. For more information, visit AUCD's website: [www.aucd.org](http://www.aucd.org).

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