

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 10, 2011

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, and Education  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and  
Human Services, and Education  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
304 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Shelby:

On behalf of the State and Territorial Councils on Developmental Disabilities (DD Councils), the Protection and Advocacy (P&A) Systems, and University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) in every state and territory, we respectfully seek your support for at least the funding levels included in the President's Fiscal Year 2012 budget request. This would mean at least \$75,066,000 for the DD Councils, \$41,024,000 for the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (PADD) program run by P&A Systems, and \$38,943,000 for the UCEDDs.

DD Councils utilize federal funding to support model demonstration grant projects that have increased access to housing, transportation, inclusive education, employment and secondary transition services for persons with developmental disabilities and their families. DD Councils have promoted the productivity, inclusion and integration of people with developmental disabilities by advancing innovative solutions that benefit these people, their families and communities.

P&A Systems utilize PADD funding to ensure that children and adults with disabilities who live in all settings are free from abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation. PADD's efforts also emphasize supports and services that make community living a long term reality. With 57 P&A agencies that advocate on behalf of persons with disabilities in every state, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories, the P&A System is the largest provider of legally-based advocacy services in the United States.

UCEDDs utilize federal funding to promote opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities to exercise self-determination, be independent, productive, integrated and included in all facets of community life. They achieve these goals by conducting research, providing training and technical assistance, and providing evidence-based direct services and supports to people with developmental disabilities, their families, and communities. This includes culturally-competent diagnosis, evaluation, supports, and services for children and

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adults in health care, cognitive development, positive behavior supports, education, daily living, and work skills.

Despite fiscal constraints over the past decade, P&As, UCEDDs, and DD Councils continue to do important work on behalf of the nation's most vulnerable citizens. Assuring level funding in FY 2012 will help to make certain that UCEDDs, P&As, and DD Councils continue to successfully promote true inclusion of persons with developmental disabilities across the lifespan in all aspects of community life.

With unemployment of individuals with developmental disabilities significantly higher than the general population, it is even more critical that DD Councils, UCEDDs, and P&As have adequate funding now to help create and support programs and policies that move people with developmental disabilities into the workforce, which results in more productive lives that benefit individuals and society as a whole.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your continued attention to these important national priorities.

Sincerely,

Richard Blumenthal

W. V. Roth

Jeffrey A. Merkley

Jay Rockefeller

Jack Durbin

W. V. Roth

John F. Kerry