

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 3, 2009

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor,
Health & Human Services, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor,
Health & Human Services, and Education
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt,

As your Subcommittee prepares to mark up the FY 2010 Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations bill, we ask that the House include an overall increase of \$20 million for the programs authorized under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000. These programs include the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD); State and Territorial Councils on Developmental Disabilities; the Protection and Advocacy Systems (P & A); the Protection and Advocacy System for Voting Access.

The University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs) is a network of 67 university-based centers that provide interdisciplinary education, conduct research and develop model services for children and adults with disabilities across the lifespan. UCEDDs develop evidence-based practices and provide training and technical assistance to thousands of professionals currently in practice and the next generation of professionals across a broad spectrum of disciplines.

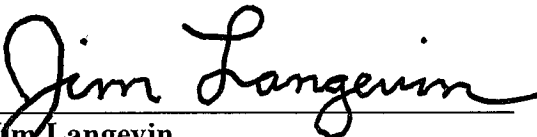
Additional funding for the State and Territorial Developmental Disability Councils would help to address the long-term underfunding and lack of cost-of-living increases that have forced Councils to cut back on initiatives in the States and Territories to address the needs of the nation's most vulnerable citizens. Adequate funding will help to assure continued expansion of infrastructure and supports that promote inclusion of persons with developmental disabilities into all aspects of community life across the lifespan.

The Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (PADD) Program is the direct services program within the Act which investigates abuse and neglect in facilities and the community. As the opportunity for people to live more independently increases, the challenges of monitoring and ensuring the appropriateness and safety of their living arrangements increases. In addition, the PADD program is also the largest enforcer of IDEA for children with developmental disabilities.


The Protection and Advocacy System for Voting Access (PAVA) Program is also funded under the Administration for Developmental Disabilities. P&As are working throughout the country to assure that people with disabilities are able to vote in an independent and private manner. There are reports from the 2008 Presidential election of inaccessible polling places, untrained poll workers and discrimination against persons with intellectual disabilities.


We thank you for your previous support of these critical programs. We look forward to working with you on addressing the needs and protecting the rights of the more than 5,400,000 individuals with developmental disabilities across the United States.

Sincerely,


Jim Langevin
Member of Congress



Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress

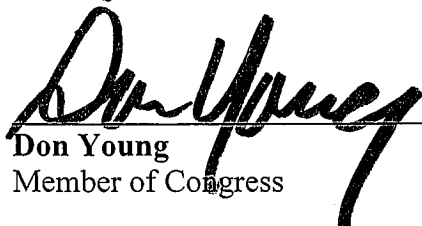

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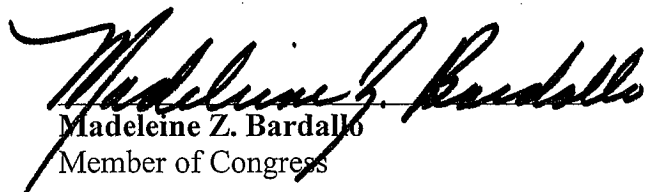

Fortney Pete Stark
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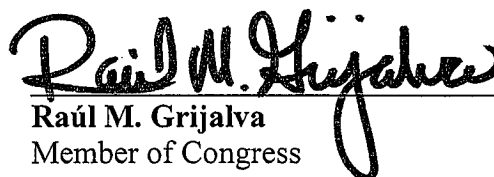
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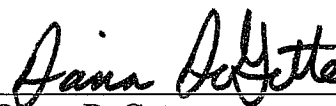
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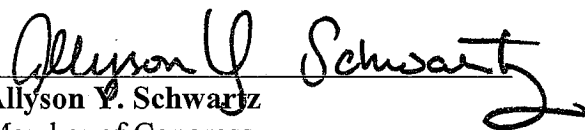
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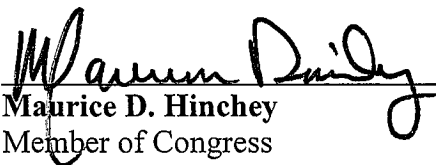
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