



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

November 22, 2011

Chairman Dennis Rehberg
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rehberg and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Education Task Force respectfully seek your support in conference for level-funding for the Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities at \$10.9 million in the Fiscal Year 2012 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill. This program is authorized under Title VII, Part D of the Higher Education Act (P.L 110-315).

The employment rate of working-age adults with disabilities is 36.9%, compared with 79.7% of people without disabilities. While access to a quality higher education clearly contributes to better employment outcomes and higher earnings across the lifespan, historically little investment has been placed on supporting students with disabilities in postsecondary education. Only approximately 12% of working-age adults with disabilities hold a college degree, a rate less than half that of the general population. In addition, few postsecondary opportunities exist for students with intellectual disabilities. The Transition and Postsecondary Education Programs for Students with intellectual disabilities (TPSID) are designed to address these concerns.

These programs assist students with intellectual disabilities to transition to and fully participate in higher education opportunities that will ultimately lead to independent living and gainful employment. There are currently 27 TPSID projects being implemented in 23 states and will ultimately serve approximately 6,000 students on 53 college campuses by the end of the 5-year project period. Through the work of the TPSID National Coordinating Center, there will emerge a valid and reliable evaluation framework to demonstrate the effectiveness of these programs and the use of public dollars to support them.

As you move into conference, we strongly urge you support this program. We know it plays a vital role in providing education and employment opportunities for young adults with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Autism National Committee
Council for Exceptional Children
Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Inc.
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
Easter Seals
Epilepsy Foundation

Helen Keller National Center
Higher Education Consortium for Special Education
Learning Disabilities Association of America
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Consortium on Deafblindness
National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Society
National Rehabilitation Association
The Arc of the U.S.

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities is a coalition of nearly 100 national consumer, advocacy, provider and professional organizations headquartered in Washington, D.C. Since 1973, the CCD has advocated on behalf of people of all ages with disabilities and their families. CCD works to achieve federal legislation and regulations that assure that the 54 million children and adults with disabilities are fully integrated into the mainstream of society. For more information, please contact:

Katy Beh Neas, Easter Seals	202.347.3066	kneas@easterseals.com
Laura Kaloi, National Center for Learning Disabilities	703.476.4894	lkaloi@ncld.org
Cindy Smith, National Disability Rights Network	202-408-9514	cindy.smith@ndrn.org