



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

May 3, 2019

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
2365 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
1026 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable José Serrano
Chairman
U.S. House Commerce, Justice, Science
Appropriations Subcommittee
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Chairman
U.S. Senate Commerce, Justice, Science
Appropriations Subcommittee
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Ranking Member
U.S. House Commerce, Justice, Science
Appropriations Subcommittee
1203 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Commerce, Justice, Science
Appropriations Subcommittee
506 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairpersons Lowey, Serrano, Shelby and Moran, Vice Chair Leahy, and Ranking Members Granger, Aderholt and Shaheen:

The undersigned members of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) write to express our support for the Legal Services Corporation (LSC). CCD is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, integration, and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

As organizations committed to advocating for the rights and dignity of people with disabilities to participate fully and equally in society, we value the critical legal assistance made available to

people with disabilities by the LSC. Over eighty-nine million people qualified for legal aid at some point during 2016, and a significant percentage of those were people with disabilities.

Legal services lawyers funded by LSC represent low-income people with disabilities in a wide range of important matters, such as securing services to enable parents with disabilities to keep their families together and avoid losing custody of their children, obtaining reasonable accommodations to ensure that individuals with disabilities can remain in their housing and keep their jobs, and obtaining eligibility for Medicaid, SSI, and other public benefits programs as well as preventing the loss of needed Medicaid services. Moreover, Legal Service lawyers help people with disabilities obtain critical home and community based services that enable them to remain in their homes and communities, rather than more expensive nursing homes or other such institutions.

Whether representing a single mother who was terminated for not showing up at work despite having requested FMLA leave to take her two-year-old son with a disability to his monthly doctor visits, securing Medicaid benefits to cover the costs of a kidney transplant for a 34-year-old man who would die without the surgery, or assisting a 54-year-old man with a disability terminate a guardianship that was no longer necessary so he could live independently, the work of legal service attorneys has a tremendous impact on the lives of persons with disabilities.

Despite the essential role played by LSC, the budget “blueprint” released by the White House would eliminate funding for LSC, leaving millions of persons with disabilities with critical legal needs without assistance to navigate many aspects of the legal process and denying them the help they need to ensure that their basic needs are met.

We urge that, in determining appropriations for Fiscal Year 2020, you ensure that LSC is robustly funded.

Sincerely,

American Association on Health and Disability

American Association of People with Disabilities

The Arc of the United States

Association of University Centers on Disabilities

Autistic Self Advocacy Network

Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

Center for Public Representation

Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund

Justice in Aging

National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys

National Disability Rights Network

Paralyzed Veterans of America

Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies

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