



May 14, 2026

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito

Chair

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education,
and Related Agencies

170 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Aderholt

Chair

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies

272 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin

Ranking Member

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education,
and Related Agencies

141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro

Ranking Member

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies

2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for FY 2027 Funding for Rehabilitation and Disability Research at NIDILRR and Related Programs within the Administration for Community Living

Dear Chairs Moore Capito and Aderholt and Ranking Members Baldwin and DeLauro:

On behalf of the disability and rehabilitation research community, the undersigned individuals, organizations, and institutions ***urge you to fund the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) at \$150 million in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027*** Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. We believe that a \$150 million investment in NIDILRR is a long-overdue and necessary increase to strengthen the nation's disability and rehabilitation research infrastructure and advance outcomes for people with disabilities.

NIDILRR plays a unique and critical role within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) by serving as the federal government's primary research agency focused on improving the lives of people with disabilities. Its mission—to generate new knowledge and improve outcomes through improved health and function, ability to return to work, and independent living—is unique within the federal government and not duplicated by any other agency. Through its support of rehabilitation research, capacity-building centers, TBI, SCI, and burn model systems,

and developing accessible technologies and knowledge translation—NIDILRR drives innovation in health, employment, housing, and community living for people with disabilities across the lifespan.

We are grateful for Congress' decision to fully fund NIDILRR in FY 2026, but when adjusted for inflation, NIDILRR's current budget supports far less research capacity than it did a decade ago. To adequately address the growing demand for community-based and data-driven disability research, and to support the next generation of disability researchers, we urge Congress to enact a long-overdue funding increase to \$150 million annually. This investment is critical to ensuring that research keeps pace with the evolving needs of the disability community, supports improvement in outcomes, and upholds the ultimate promise of the Americans with Disabilities Act¹ and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973², as amended.

The DRRC also supports full funding of programs under the Administration for Community Living that are complimentary of the research funded through NIDILRR, including the Limb Loss Resource Center, the Paralysis Resource Center, the Traumatic Brain Injury State Grant program, and the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities. These programs are critical for the disability communities they serve.

We appreciate your continued leadership and commitment to advancing disability and rehabilitation research.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Disability and Rehabilitation Research Coalition (DRRC) Members

Alliance for NIDILRR Grantees*

Academy of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals

American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

American Association on Health & Disability*

American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine*

American Occupational Therapy Association*

American Physical Therapy Association*

American Spinal Injury Association

¹ *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*. 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101-12213.

² *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*. 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.

American Therapeutic Recreation Association
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Brain Injury Association of America*
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
National Association for the Advancement of Orthotics and Prosthetics
RESNA
Spina Bifida Association
United Spinal Association
VisionServe Alliance

DRRC Steering Committee Member*

Additional Supporting Organizations

Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals
Allies for Independence
American Parkinson Disease Association
Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired
Autism Society of America
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Beyond The Box Advocacy
Burn Survivors of New England
CommunicationFIRST
Consortium of MS Centers
Cornell University, Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability
COVID-19 Longhauler Advocacy Project
Craig Hospital
Easterseals, Inc.
Indiana University School of Medicine
International Organization of MS Nurses
Lakeshore Foundation
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys
National Health Law Program
The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies
Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors
Social Work Disability Justice League
The University of Florida
The University of Missouri-Kansas City's Institute for Human Development
The University of Pittsburgh
The University of Texas at San Antonio
Vanderbilt Health

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