

COUNCIL ON COMMUNITY ADVOCACY

November 28, 2012

Dear Senator,

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was adopted on December 13th, 2006, making it the first treaty to address disability rights globally. Since then, 154 countries have signed the treaty, and 126 countries have ratified it.

Article 3 of the CRPD delineates the General Principles of the treaty for the rights of persons with disabilities. These include:

- Respect for inherent dignity
- Non-discrimination;
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- Equality of opportunity;
- Accessibility

The CRPD has inspired nations around the world to reshape their laws and constitutions to ensure and promote the rights and dignity of people with disabilities. The US has led the disability movement with its development of the ADA and other disability rights protections. We urge you to honor our leadership in this area and support ratification of the treaty in order to encourage other countries to create accessible environments for both their disabled citizens and Americans with disabilities, who travel, work, study, and serve abroad. The United States became a signatory to the CRPD in July of 2009. The Association of University Centers on Disabilities' (AUCD) Council on Community Advocacy (COCA) urges you and your colleagues in the Senate to join with US allies from North and South America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia, in ratifying the CRPD.

The spirit of the CRPD is already codified in the United States in the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008, amongst other laws. Ratifying the treaty gives the US the opportunity to guide other countries with developing disability legislation, opens the door for an international market of accessible American products, all while celebrating our nation's long history in protecting the rights of people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Shannon Caldwell
Family Co-Chair, COCA
Home: 606 330-1702, Cell: 606 524-6670
Email: sjgc14@windstream.net

Dawn Olson
Person with a Disability Co-Chair, COCA
Work: 701-839-4724 Cell: 701-720-7251
Email: dawn@independencecil.org