



a program of United Spinal Association

June 21, 2012

The Honorable John Kerry
Chairman
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Lugar
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Kerry and Ranking Member Lugar:

VetsFirst, a program of United Spinal Association, wishes to express our strong support for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). We urge swift action by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in favorably reporting this important treaty to the full Senate.

We are proud that the United States has led the world in creating access for all people with disabilities. The ability of disabled veterans to have equal opportunity of access to rehabilitation, employment, and educational opportunities is critical to their ability to reintegrate into their communities. As a result, we are fierce defenders of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) because of its assurances of equality for people with disabilities.

In order to continue to lead the world in ensuring access for people with disabilities, the United States must ratify the CRPD. The CRPD embodies the protections and opportunities available through the ADA, but on a global scale. Our ratification of the CRPD will ensure that we will be able to continue to influence the development of access for people with disabilities across the world.

Increasing access in the global community for people with disabilities is particularly important because of the increasingly global marketplace in which workers must compete. Without this access, disabled veterans may be unable to travel or live abroad as required by their job responsibilities. United States ratification of the CRPD, which fully compliments American access laws for people with disabilities, sends an important message to the world community regarding inclusion of people with disabilities.

We appreciate your leadership on this issue and urge swift action on the CRPD. If you have any questions, please contact Heather Ansley, Vice President of Veterans Policy for VetsFirst, a program of United Spinal Association, at (202) 556-2076, ext. 7702 or by e-mail at hansley@vetsfirst.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather L. Ansley".

Heather L. Ansley, Esq., MSW
Vice President of Veterans Policy
VetsFirst, a program of United Spinal Association

