



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

The undersigned member organizations of the Consortium for Citizens (CCD) are writing to express our support for the Disability Integration Act (S. 910, H.R. 2472). This legislation, if passed, would ensure the rights of people with disabilities to live full and independent lives in their communities.

CCD is a coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration, and inclusion of the approximately 57 million children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society.

The undersigned organizations endorse the Disability Integration Act's goals of ensuring that millions of Americans with disabilities have access to services they need to live in the community and of removing the institutional bias in critical Federal programs. This bill builds on the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Supreme Court's *Olmstead* decision, and asserts that people with disabilities have a right to live in their own homes and communities and to receive the services and supports they need to do so.

For too many years, thousands of people with disabilities have been isolated and segregated in institutional settings, where they lose the opportunity to be full participants in society. As the Supreme Court observed in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, "confinement in an institution severely diminishes the everyday life activities of individuals, including family relations, social contacts, work options, economic independence, educational advancement, and cultural enrichment,"¹ and furthermore, institutionalizing people who could live in community settings "perpetuates unwarranted assumptions that persons so isolated are incapable or unworthy of participating in community life."²

While we have made progress in recent years in expanding home and community-based services for individuals with disabilities, many thousands of people with disabilities remain in institutional settings when they could and should have the opportunity to live, work, and receive services in their own homes and communities. The Disability Integration Act would complement the ADA and accelerate the pace of people with disabilities leaving institutions, including by describing with specificity steps that must be taken by states and providers of insurance covering long-term services and supports to achieve community integration.

We urge Congress to pass the Disability Integration Act and affirm the right of people with disabilities to live independently and be full participants in their communities.

¹ 527 U.S. 581, 583 (1999).

² *Id.*

The Advocacy Institute
Allies for Independence/Advance CLASS
American Association on Health and Disability
American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD)
American Association of People with Disabilities
American Civil Liberties Union
American Foundation for the Blind
The Arc of the United States
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs
Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE)
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN)
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Brain Injury Association of America
Center for Public Representation
The Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
Lutheran Services in America Disability Network
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys
The National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Organization of Nurses with Disabilities (NOND)
National Respite Coalition
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Paralyzed Veterans of America
Parent to Parent USA
TASH
United Cerebral Palsy
United Spinal Association