

# DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING ALLIANCE

July 17, 2012

The Honorable SENATOR  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Dear Senator NAME:

On May 17, 2012 the Senate received a treaty package for their advice and consent to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Alliance (DHHA), a Coalition of Consumer and Professional Organizations, supports ratification of CRPD.

DHHA focuses on federal public policy that can improve the quality of life for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. The DHHA's major objective is to provide a forum whereby relevant information can be shared, plans made and actions taken for collaborative and mutually supportive efforts. We ask for your support for U.S. ratification of the CRPD.

Similar to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the principles of the CRPD include equality, non-discrimination, inclusion in society, accessibility, and respect for inherent dignity. Twenty two years ago on July 26th, President George H.W. Bush signed the ADA, calling for the "walls of discrimination to come tumbling down." Since that time, the ADA has been model legislation for ending discriminatory practices throughout the world and a key inspiration for the CRPD.

One hundred and sixteen nations have ratified the CRPD, including important allies of the U.S. The treaty reflects core American values such as the dignity of the individual, access to justice, respect for the home and family, and the right to education. The CRPD is consistent with not only the ADA, but also with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and numerous other U.S. laws.

The CRPD seeks to ensure that countries across the globe provide people with disabilities the same rights as everyone else in order to live full, satisfying and productive lives. To this end, the CRPD will create greater access for Americans serving, working, traveling, and studying abroad. The treaty package submitted to the Senate this May includes reservations, understandings, and a declaration that allow the United States to meet the obligations of the treaty without requiring any costs or changes in law.

We are committed to our country's leadership in promoting the rights and dignity of all people with disabilities. We believe the ratification of the CRPD will allow the U.S. to continue in our global leadership on disability rights. We therefore urge the Senate to continue the bipartisan tradition of supporting the disability community by uniting in support of the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Sincerely,



Barbara Raimondo  
Co-Chair



Janet Bailey  
Co-Chair

Alexander Graham Bell  
Association for the Deaf  
and Hard of Hearing

American Academy  
of Audiology

American Society for  
Deaf Children

American Speech  
Language-  
Hearing Association

Conference of Educational  
Administrators of Schools  
and Programs for the Deaf

Council of American  
Instructors of the Deaf

Hands & Voices

Hearing Health  
Foundation

Hearing Loss Association  
of America

International Hearing  
Society

National Association  
of the Deaf

National Court Reporters  
Association

National Cued Speech  
Association

Registry of Interpreters  
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