



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

January 16, 2009

Daniel K. Inouye, Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
S.128 U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Thad Cochran, Ranking Minority Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
S. 146-A U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20501

Max Baucus, Chairman
Senate Finance Committee
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Charles Grassley, Ranking Minority
Member
Senate Finance Committee
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators:

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) urges you to support a one-time cash payment to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries in the economic recovery bill.

There are more than 7 million poor people who have disabilities or are elderly who receive SSI benefits monthly. People who rely on SSI are among the poorest in the country, subsisting on cash benefits averaging \$477 a month. Providing these beneficiaries with an extra monthly payment will help to stimulate the economy because they are very likely to spend the money quickly for items they need in their daily lives.

As you know, the maximum federal benefit payment for SSI in 2009 is \$674 for an individual and \$1,011 for a couple. The maximum federal benefit is approximately 74 percent of the federal poverty level. An additional payment to SSI beneficiaries would assist beneficiaries in meeting their daily subsistence needs and would be especially important while our national economy is imposing so much uncertainty into their lives. Of course, the legislation should ensure that the payment is not considered income and is excluded as a resource, for purposes of SSI, Medicaid, housing or other important federal support programs.

We support the inclusion of the additional benefit payment to SSI beneficiaries and urge you to ensure its inclusion in the final economic recovery bill.

CCD is a working coalition of national consumer, advocacy, provider, and professional organizations working together with and on behalf of the 54 million children and adults with disabilities and their families living in the United States.

Sincerely,

Marty Ford
Chairperson

ON BEHALF OF:

ADAP Advocacy Association
American Association of People with Disabilities
American Association on Health and Disability
American Association on Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities
American Council of the Blind
American Foundation for the Blind
American Network of Community Options and Resources
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs
Autism Society of America
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Center for Disability Issues & the Health Professions
Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
Easter Seals, Inc
Epilepsy Foundation
Helen Keller National Center
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association of Private Special Education Centers
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Coalition on Deaf-Blindness
National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth
National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Down Syndrome Society
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives
National Respite Coalition
NISH
Paralyzed Veterans of America
The Arc of the United States
United Cerebral Palsy
United Jewish Communities
United Spinal Association
World Institute on Disability