



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS
WITH DISABILITIES**

October 27, 2009

The Honorable Robert Menendez
Chairman
Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Menendez:

On behalf of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Housing Task Force, we are writing to express our strong support for the Frank Melville Supportive Housing Investment Act of 2009 (S. 1481). We are grateful for your leadership in introducing this critical legislation. The CCD Housing Task Force is a coalition of national disability organizations which advocates on behalf of the housing needs of people with a variety of disabilities, including developmental disabilities, mental illness, sensory, and physical disabilities.

As you know, the HUD Section 811 program is a critical affordable housing resource for non-elderly people with severe disabilities. While the program has been effective in developing permanent supportive housing, improvements are much needed. S. 1481 will streamline and simplify the existing process by which 811 sponsors compete for new projects. It will also reform Section 811 and allow for investment of new capital resources from programs such as the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and HOME in supportive housing developments. Finally S. 1481 would resolve the current funding threat to the program due to the renewal costs associated with Section 811 “mainstream” vouchers.

People with all types of disabilities face a housing crisis in this country due to the lack of affordable and accessible supportive housing. S. 1481’s improvements to the Section 811 program will help to expand the housing options available for people with disabilities in communities across the nation.

Thank you again for your leadership. We look forward to working with you and your staff to secure swift enactment of this legislation.

For further information, please contact the Co-Chairs of the CCD Housing Task Force: Andrew Sperling, National Alliance on Mental Illness (Andrew@nami.org), Liz Savage, The Arc and United Cerebral Palsy Disability Policy Collaboration (savage@thedpc.org), or Jessica Sadowsky, American Network of Community Options and Resources (jsadowsky@ancor.org).

Thank you.

Sincerely,

American Association of People with Disabilities
American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
American Network of Community Options and Resources
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Autism Society
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Burton Blatt Institute
Easter Seals
Lutheran Services in America
Mental Health America
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability
Directors
National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
National Council on Independent Living
National Disability Rights Network
National MS Society
National Spinal Cord Injury Association
The Arc of the United States
United Cerebral Palsy
United Jewish Communities
United Spinal Association