

# DISABILITY AND REHABILITATION RESEARCH COALITION

1501 M STREET, N.W. SUITE 700 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005

June 28, 2018

The Honorable Robert Jaeger  
Director  
National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research  
Administration for Community Living  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
330 C Street SW, Room 1304  
Washington, DC 20201

**Re: Meeting Request to Discuss Comprehensive Government-Wide Strategic Plan on  
Disability Research**

Dear Director Jaeger:

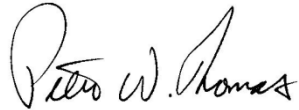
On behalf of the 24 member organizations of the Disability and Rehabilitation Research Coalition (DRRC), we would like to request a meeting with you to discuss the requirement in Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which included amendments to the Rehabilitation Act, for the Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR) to develop and implement a comprehensive Government-Wide Strategic Plan on disability research. We understand that you, as the Director of the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR), have been appointed as the representative for Secretary Alex M. Azar II to serve as the Director of the ICDR. As such, we seek a meeting solely devoted to this topic at your earliest opportunity which would include other DRRC coalition representatives.

The DRRC is a coalition of national non-profit organizations committed to improving the science of disability, independent living, and rehabilitation. The DRRC seeks to maximize the return on the federal investment in disability, independent living, and rehabilitation research with the goal of improving the ability of Americans with disabilities to live and function as independently as possible. The coalition plays a leadership role in increasing and leveraging federal resources devoted to disability, independent living, and rehabilitation research.

We believe that each federal agency engaged in various aspects of research and development in these areas plays a vital role in the government's efforts to advance the science of rehabilitation, disability, and independent living. We believe the ICDR is the key entity within the federal government that can help maximize return on the federal investment in these areas. This starts with a comprehensive government-wide strategic plan, as established in Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which included amendments to the Rehabilitation Act. The statutory language details specific requirements for this strategic plan. To date, ICDR has published a background paper on this issue but the next steps are the design, development, publication, and implementation of a government-wide strategic plan.

We view this as an incredible opportunity to coordinate federal research programs in this area across the federal government to improve the lives of people with disabilities and chronic conditions, and are excited to meet with you to discuss ways to advance this issue. We look forward to meeting with you at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions, please contact me directly by email at [Peter.Thomas@powerslaw.com](mailto:Peter.Thomas@powerslaw.com) or by phone at (202) 466-6550.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter W. Thomas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P".

Peter W. Thomas  
Counsel, DRRC

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bobby Silverstein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B".

Bobby Silverstein  
Counsel, DRRC

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Academy of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals  
American Academy of Orthotists & Prosthetists  
American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation  
American Association on Health and Disability  
American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine  
American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association  
American Music Therapy Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Physical Therapy Association  
American Therapeutic Recreation Association  
Amputee Coalition of America  
Association of Academic Physiatrists  
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Brain Injury Association of America  
Child Neurology Society  
Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation  
National Association for the Advancement Orthotics & Prosthetics  
National Association of Rehabilitation Research Training Centers  
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators  
National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America  
United Spinal Association