

# DISABILITY AND REHABILITATION RESEARCH COALITION

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

July 21, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
United States Capitol S-230  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
United States Capitol S-221  
Washington, DC 20510

## **Re: Serious Concerns Regarding Access to Rehabilitation Care in Health Care Reform Legislation**

Dear Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer:

The Disability and Rehabilitation Research Coalition (DRRC) writes in reference to the Better Care Reconciliation Act of 2017. DRRC is a coalition of national non-profit organizations committed to improving the science of rehabilitation, disability, and independent living. DRRC seeks to maximize the return on the federal investment in this type of research and development with the goal of improving the ability of Americans with disabilities and chronic conditions to live and function as independently as possible and to contribute to the health and economic well-being of our nation.

DRRC is seriously concerned that current health care reform proposals will undermine efforts to prevent or minimize the impact of injuries and disability-related conditions. Access to cutting edge rehabilitation services and devices enables individuals with injuries, illnesses, and disabilities to maximize their quality of life by enhancing their health, function, and independence. Progress and innovation in the science of disability and rehabilitation are meaningless if the individuals in need of these services cannot access them. We believe that any version of health reform legislation that advances in the House and Senate must maintain access to and coverage of rehabilitation services and devices.

Current health reform legislative proposals would cut or cap Medicaid coverage and undermine patient protections established by the Affordable Care Act, including requirements for insurers to cover a defined package of essential health benefits (EHBs), which include rehabilitative services and devices. We are deeply concerned with the impact of these changes on coverage of and access to rehabilitation services and devices.

DRRC urges Congress to promote innovation in the science of disability and rehabilitation by working in a bipartisan manner to improve access to affordable, comprehensive care for all Americans, including those with disabilities and chronic conditions needing rehabilitation services and devices.

Sincerely,

The undersigned members of the DRRC

Academy of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals  
American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation  
American Association on Health and Disability  
*(continued on next page)*

American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine  
American Music Therapy Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Physical Therapy Association  
Amputee Coalition of America  
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation  
Lakeshore Foundation  
National Association for the Advancement Orthotics & Prosthetics  
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators  
National Council on Independent Living  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
RESNA  
United Spinal Association