

# *Disability and Rehabilitation Research Coalition*

*1501 M Street, N.W. Suite 700 Washington, D.C. 20005*

March 19, 2015

## **DRRC ENTHUSIASTICALLY SUPPORTS ENACTMENT OF S. 800 and H.R. 1469, COMPANION BILLS INTRODUCED BY SENATORS KIRK AND BENNET AND CONGRESSMEN LANGEVIN AND HARPER TO ENHANCE THE STATURE AND VISIBILITY OF MEDICAL REHABILITATION SCIENCE AT NIH**

On March 19, 2015 Senators Mark Kirk (R-II.) and Michael Bennet (D-CO) and Congressmen Jim Langevin (D-RI) and Gregg Harper (R-MS) introduced “The Enhancing the Stature and Visibility of Medical Rehabilitation Research at the NIH Act” (companion bills: S. 800 and H.R. 1469) to improve, coordinate, and enhance medical rehabilitation research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The Disability and Rehabilitation Research Coalition (DRRC) enthusiastically supports the enactment of S.800 and H.R. 1469 because the time is now to enhance the stature and visibility of medical rehabilitation research at the world’s premier medical research agency and by so doing send a clear and unequivocal message that rehabilitation services and devices are essential health care benefits for people with disabilities and chronic conditions.

We applaud the efforts by Senators Kirk and Bennet and Congressmen Langevin and Harper to include in the bill many of the recommendations made by the Blue Ribbon Panel on Medical Rehabilitation Research established by NIH in December 2012. We are particularly supportive of the provisions in the bill designed to enhance coordination within NIH and with other agencies and update and streamline rehabilitation research priorities. We also support the provisions in the bill which specify that the Research Plan must be updated every five years following a scientific conference or workshop; provide for an annual progress report; tie co-funding of medical rehabilitation research projects to the Research Plan, and include a definition of medical rehabilitation research.

We urge the Senate to enact S. 800 and the House of Representatives to enact H.R. 1469 because the companion bills send a powerful message that our Nation can and must improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities and chronic conditions by enhancing medical rehabilitation research at NIH and, by so doing, improve the provision of rehabilitation services and devices.

The DRRC is a coalition of 40 national non-profit organizations committed to improving the science of rehabilitation and disability. The DRRC seeks to maximize the return on the federal investment in rehabilitation and disability research with the goal of optimizing the health and function and quality of life of persons with injuries, illnesses, disabilities, and chronic conditions.

For additional information, contact Peter Thomas [(202) 466-6550; peter.thomas@ppsv.com].

## **DRRC Member Organizations**

American Academy of Neurology  
American Academy of Orthotists & Prosthetists  
American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation  
American Association of People with Disabilities  
American Association of Spinal Cord Injury Psychologists and Social Workers  
American Association on Health and Disability  
American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine  
American Foundation for the Blind  
American Hospital Association  
American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association  
American Music Therapy Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Physical Therapy Association  
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association  
American Therapeutic Recreation Association  
Amputee Coalition of America  
Arthritis Foundation  
Association of Academic Physiatrists  
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs  
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Brain Injury Association of America  
Child Neurology Foundation  
Child Neurology Society  
Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation  
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund  
Federation for American Hospitals  
Lakeshore Foundation  
March of Dimes  
Mental Health America  
National Association for the Advancement Orthotics & Prosthetics  
National Association of Rehabilitation Research Training Centers  
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators  
National Association of Veterans' Research and Education Foundations  
National Council on Independent Living  
National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
North American Brain Injury Society  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
RESNA  
Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation  
United Spinal Association