



July 14, 2012

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman  
Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michael Enzi  
Ranking Member  
Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: Over 150 National, State, and Local Organizations Ask Congress to Pass the Keeping All Students Safe Act (S.2020/H.R. 1381)**

We, the undersigned, believe it is time for a national policy addressing restraint and seclusion in our schools for all children. In 2009, a Government Accountability Office study found children have been injured, traumatized, and even killed through restraint and seclusion in schools. In March 2012, data released by the Department of Education showed that nearly 40,000 students were physically restrained during the 2009-10 school year; 70% of whom were students with disabilities. The data also showed that these practices are disproportionately used upon minority students.

There have been numerous news reports of students harmed by restraints and seclusion. Less than 1/3 of states restrict restraint and seclusion use to emergencies involving an imminent risk of physical harm. It is important that use of restraint and seclusion be limited to these emergencies. While federal law protects children and adults from the use of restraints and seclusion in hospitals, no similar federal laws exist to protect children in schools. We urge Congress to pass the Keeping All Students Safe Act bills (S.2020 and H.R. 1381), and create minimum restraint/seclusion standards in schools that will protect all children.

The Keeping All Students Safe Act will promote a shift toward preventing problematic behavior through the use of de-escalation techniques, conflict management and evidence-based positive behavioral interventions and supports. This shift will help school personnel understand the needs of their students and safely address the source of challenging behaviors – a better result for everyone in the classroom. In many cases, the use of positive supports and interventions greatly diminishes and even eliminates the need to use restraint and seclusion. For example, the Centennial School in Pennsylvania, which serves children in 35 school districts, has cut the use of restraint and seclusion from well over 1,000 occurrences per year to less than ten through the use of positive supports. Reports and studies have also shown that students and staff are safer when positive interventions and supports, rather than restraint and seclusion, are used in schools. Worker's Compensation costs even decrease significantly.

S. 2020 and H.R. 1381 will protect all children in school. They will ensure that restraints are used only in emergencies posing an imminent threat of physical danger. If less restrictive and dangerous measures like de-escalation, conflict management, and positive behavioral supports will prevent the threat, the bills will require that they be used. The bills will provide similar protections from seclusion. They will require prompt parental notification. They will ban the use of restraints that impede breathing or harm children or staff. The bills will ensure that staff are properly trained in evidence-based methods to minimize the use of restraint and seclusion and to protect children and staff.

We ask Congress to pass the Keeping All Students Safe Act and make our schools safer for students and staff. America needs more than the current patchwork of state laws to ensure that every child is afforded protection.

For more information about this letter, please contact Jessica Butler, Congressional Affairs Coordinator, Autism National Committee, [jessica@jnba.net](mailto:jessica@jnba.net) ([www.autcom.org](http://www.autcom.org))

Signed,

**National Organizations**

Advocacy Institute  
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Association on Health and Disability  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychiatric Nurses Association  
Association on Higher Education And Disability (AHEAD)  
Autism National Committee  
Autism Society of America  
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law  
Boat People SOS, Inc.  
Center for Law and Education  
Cherab Foundation  
Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf  
Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Inc. (COPAA)  
CPS Initiative  
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)  
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (DREDF)  
Disability Rights Legal Center  
Families Against Restraint and Seclusion  
Gay Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN)  
Gray Panthers  
Higher Education Consortium on Special Education  
Learning Disabilities Association of America  
Mental Health America  
National Association for Children's Behavioral Health  
National Association of Rural Mental Health

National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors  
 National Autism Association  
 National Disability Rights Network  
 National Down Syndrome Congress  
 National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health  
 National Fragile X Foundation  
 National Organization for Women Foundation  
 National Organization of Nurses with Disabilities (NOND)  
 OurChildrenLeftBehind.Com  
 Parents and Teachers Against Violence in Education, Inc.  
 Pediatric Stroke Network, Inc.  
 Prader-Willi Syndrome Association (USA)  
 Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)  
 Southern Poverty Law Center  
 Speech & Language Disorders in Children  
 Teacher Education Division of the Council on Exceptional Children  
 The Arc of the United States  
 The National Alliance on Mental Illness  
 The National Council on Independent Living (NCIL)  
 InterNational Council on Infertility Information Dissemination Inc. (INCIID Inc.)  
 Tourette Syndrome Association, Inc.  
 Family Network on Disabilities

**State Organizations by State**

Down Syndrome Society of Mobile County	AL
Area Board XIII	CA
California Safe Schools	CA
CAPCA (California Association for Parent-Child Advocacy)	CA
Educate. Advocate.	CA
Families For Early Autism Treatment	CA
Hope PTA	CA
Independent Living Resource Center, Inc.	CA
Learning Rights Law Center	CA
Parents Advocating Together	CA
West Los Angeles Trauma and Crime Victim Center	CA
Colorado Cross Disability Coalition	CO
Community Link	CO
Mental Health America of Colorado	CO
The Arc of the Pikes Peak Region	CO
Advocates for Justice and Education	DC
disAbility Solutions for Independent Living	FL
Reveresco ABA Therapy	FL
Apraxia in Metro Atlanta	GA
Autism Society Georgia Chapter	GA
Georgia Families Against Restraint and Seclusion	GA
Gwinnett SToPP	GA
Living Independence for Everyone (LIFE), Inc.	GA
Parent to Parent of Georgia	GA

Parent to Parent of Georgia	GA
Hawai'i Parents Special Education Advisory Council (HIP-SEAC)	HI
The Arc of Iowa	IA
Tri State Down Syndrome Network	IA
Access Living	IL
Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership	IL
LIFE Center for Independent Living	IL
McHenry County Mental Health Board	IL
Mental Health Summit of Illinois	IL
Mothers on a Mission, Inc.	IL
Northwestern IL Center for Independent Living	IL
Special Kids, Special Families	IL
The Arc of Indiana	IN
Disability Rights Center of Kansas	KS
Kentucky Protection & Advocacy	KY
The Arc of Kentucky	KY
Disability Law Center (of Massachusetts)	MA
Independent Living Center of the North Shore & Cape Ann, Inc.	MA
Northeast Independent Living Program Inc	MA
Stavros Center for Independent Living, Inc.	MA
LDA of St. Mary's County	MD
Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education	MD
BenzieAdvocacy Rights Council	MI
Michigan Alliance for Special Education	MI
Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards	MI
Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council	MI
Michigan Disability Rights Coalition	MI
Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services Inc.	MI
Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority	MI
The Arc Michigan	MI
The Respect ABILITY Law Center	MI
Woodlands Behavioral Healthcare Network	MI
Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities	MN
Coastal Women for Change	MS
Disability Rights Mississippi	MS
Just Advocacy of Mississippi	MS
Mississippi Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities	MS
Mississippi Human Service Agenda	MS
Nollie Jenkins Family Center, Inc.	MS
Parents United Together	MS
ADAPT Montana	MT
Parents, Let's Unite for Kids - PLUK	MT
Council for Children's Rights	NC
Disability Rights North Carolina	NC
Gaston Residential Services, Inc.	NC
Monarch/The Arc of Stanly County	NC
Piedmont Down Syndrome Support Network	NC
Tammy Lynn Center for Developmental Disabilities	NC
The Arc of North Carolina	NC

North Carolina School Social Work Association	NC
ADAPT Nebraska	NE
Disability Rights New Jersey	NJ
Education Law Center	NJ
The Arc of New Jersey	NJ
The Special Education Leadership Council of NJ	NJ
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network	NJ
New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc.	NJ
New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education, Inc.	NJ
Regional Family Support Planning Council # 9 ( Atlantic Co.)	NJ
Millburn-Short Hills (NJ) Parent Education Committee-MSPEC	NJ
Advocacy for Children with dis-Abilities	NM
Pegasus Legal Services for Children	NM
The Center for Self Determination	NV
Center for Disability Rights	NY
Everyone Reading, Inc.	NY
Independent Living Center of the Hudson Valley Inc. (ILCHV)	NY
Independent Living Inc.	NY
New York Association on Independent Living	NY
Regional Center for Independent Living	NY
Social Justice Committee, Ithaca Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends	NY
Southern Tier ADAPT	NY
Southern Tier Independence Center	NY
Westchester Independent Living Center	NY
The Arc of Ohio	OH
The Lorain County Board of Mental Health	OH
Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs	OR
Liberty Resources Inc (Independent Living Center)	PA
The Arc of Pennsylvania	PA
Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia	PA
The Arc Anderson County	TN
The Arc Tennessee	TN
DFW Interfaith Coffee House	TX
Family Advocacy and Consultation services, Inc	UT
Special Needs Resource Project	UT
Utah Advocacy Partnership	UT
Blue Ridge Independent Living Center, Inc.	VA
disAbility Resource Center	VA
Endeppence Center, Inc.	VA
Kids With Disabilities Included and Why Not?	VA
Disability Rights Vermont, Inc. (Vermont's P&A)	VT
Green Mountain Self-Advocates	VT
Vermont Center for Independent Living	VT
PAVE - Partnerships for Action, Voices for Empowerment	WA
Specialized Training Of Military Parents (STOMP)	WA
The Arc of Washington State	WA
The Arc of King County	WA

Washington Initiative for Supported Employment	WA
Disability Rights Wisconsin	WI
North Shore People Network	WI
Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training and Support, Inc. (WI FACETS)	WI
The Arc of West Virginia	WV
The Arc of the Mid Ohio Valley	WV
Parents Helping Parents of WY, Inc	WY



July 14, 2012

The Honorable John Kline  
Chairman  
Education & the Workforce Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable George Miller  
Ranking Member  
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