

July 31, 2015

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman, HELP Committee
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, HELP Committee
835 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: **Support for Passage of S. 800, Enhancing the Stature and Visibility of Medical Rehabilitation Research at the NIH Act**

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray,

As leaders in the field of disability and rehabilitation from across the country, we strongly support S. 800, the *Enhancing the Stature and Visibility of Medical Rehabilitation Research at the NIH Act*, and urge you to mark-up this legislation as expeditiously as possible in the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee. Or alternatively, to include the provisions of S. 800 in the bipartisan comprehensive NIH and FDA bill currently under consideration by members of the HELP Committee.

Introduced by Senators Kirk and Bennet, this bipartisan legislation seeks to enhance the stature, visibility, and coordination of rehabilitation and disability research at our nation's most prestigious research enterprise, the National Institutes of Health. With the growing disability and aging demographic in this country, enhanced attention and focus on disability and rehabilitation research is critical to our nation's healthcare system and the patients it serves.

The bill is consistent with the recommendations of a Blue Ribbon Panel Report on Medical Rehabilitation Research dated January 2013, and has been discussed at length with NIH leadership. In addition, we believe the bill is budget neutral.

As individuals committed to the advancement of rehabilitation science and services to improve the health and function of individuals with illnesses, injuries, disabilities, and chronic conditions, we can attest to the critical importance of the federal investment in this promising area of research.

We urge you to consider this legislation and pass it in the Senate at your earliest opportunity. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

500+ Leaders in the field of disability and rehabilitation from across the country, listed by state.

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