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

The Honorable George Miller
Ranking Member
Education & the Workforce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Over 200 National, State, and Local Organizations Ask Congress to
Protect Schoolchildren from Dangerous Restraint & Seclusion
And Pass the Keeping All Students Safe Act**

Dear Representatives Kline and Miller,

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 that children were injured, traumatized, and even killed through restraint and seclusion in schools. The GAO documented 20 deaths of school children. In March 2012, the Civil Rights Data Collection showed that nearly 40,000 students were physically restrained during the 2009-10 school year. The data also showed that restraint and seclusion are disproportionately used upon students with disabilities and minority students.

But few states restrict restraint and seclusion of all children to emergencies threatening physical danger to a person. Fewer than 20 states prohibit the use of restraint of all children in non-emergencies; fewer than 12 protect all students from non-emergency seclusion. It is important that 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 protect children in schools. We strongly support the Keeping All Students Safe Act. We thank Congressman Miller and Congressman Harper for their leadership in introducing this bill and on restraint and seclusion. We ask Congress to pass the bill 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.

The Keeping All Students Safe Act will protect all children in school. It 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 bill will require that they be used. The bill will provide similar protections from seclusion. The bill will require that schools take steps to notify parents within 24 hours, and follow up in writing. Today, more than half the states lack laws requiring that parents of all children be informed when their child is subjected to these procedures. Prompt notification is important so parents can seek needed medical attention. The bill will ban the use of restraints that impede breathing or harm children or staff. More than half the states lack laws banning restraints that impair breathing for all children. The bill 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. Finally, the bills will require collection of data to better inform decision-making and provide needed sunshine.

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 safe and in a positive environment.

For more information about this letter, please contact Jessica Butler, Congressional Affairs Coordinator, Autism National Committee, jessica@jnba.net (www.autcom.org), 202-656-9166.

Signed By Over 200 National, State, and Local Organizations

55 National Organizations

Advocacy Institute
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry
American Association on Health and Disability
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychiatric Nurses Association
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Association on Higher Education And Disability (AHEAD)
Autism National Committee
Autism Society of America
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Boat People SOS, Inc.

Center for Law and Education
Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf
Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (CCBD)
Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates, Inc.
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
Disability Rights Legal Center
Dup15q Alliance, Inc.
Exceptional Parent
Families Against Restraint and Seclusion
Family Network on Disabilities
Gay Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN)
Gray Panthers
Higher Education Consortium for Special Education
Mental Health America
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Disorders
National Autism Association
National Center on Learning Disabilities (NCLD)
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Congress
National Empowerment Center
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
Pacer Center
Parents and Teachers Against Violence in Education, Inc.
Pediatric Stroke Network, Inc.
Prader-Willi Syndrome Association (USA)
Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) Board
Southern Poverty Law Center
Specialized Training Of Military Parents (STOMP)
TASH
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)
The William Kellibrew Foundation

United Cerebral Palsy
Witness Justice
Wrightslaw

Over 146 State and Local Organizations

California Association for Parent-Child Advocacy (CAPCA)	CA
Disability Rights California	CA
Families For Early Autism Treatment	CA
Educate. Advocate.	CA
Independent Living Resource Center, Inc.	CA
Colorado Cross Disability Coalition	CO
The Arc of Colorado	CO
Arc Thriftstores of Colorado	CO
Community Link	CO
CP of Colorado	CO
Easter Seals of Colorado	CO
Family Voices Colorado	CO
Mental Health America of Colorado	CO
Rocky Mountain Down Syndrome Association	CO
AdvocacyDenver	CO
The Arc – Jefferson, Clear Creek & Gilpin Counties	CO
The Arc of Aurora (CO)	CO
The Arc of the Pikes Peak Region	CO
Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center	CT
Connecticut Parent's Union	CT
SpEd Connecticut, Inc.	CT
Autism Spectrum Differences Institute of New England, Inc.	CT
Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities	CT
Advocates for Justice and Education	DC
Governor’s Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens	DE
Southern Legal Counsel, Inc.	FL
Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County	FL
Center for Independent Living of South Florida, Inc.	FL
disAbility Solutions for Independent Living	FL
Reveresco ABA Therapy	FL
Parent to Parent of Georgia	GA
The Arc of Georgia	GA
Autism Society Georgia Chapter	GA
Georgia Families Against Restraint and Seclusion	GA
Gwinnett SToPP	GA
Apraxia in Metro Atlanta	GA

Living Independence for Everyone (LIFE), Inc.	GA
Autism Society of Hawaii	HI
Hawai'i Parents Special Education Advisory Council (HIP-SEAC)	HI
Autism Bridges of Maui	HI
Disability Rights Iowa	IA
Iowa School Social Work Association	IA
Tri State Down Syndrome Network	IA
Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership	IL
Mental Health Summit of Illinois	IL
Illinois School Counselor Association	IL
Mental Health America of Illinois	IL
LIFE Center for Independent Living	IL
Mothers on a Mission, Inc.	IL
Special Kids, Special Families	IL
The Arc of Indiana	IN
Disability Rights Center of Kansas	KS
The Arc of Kentucky	KY
Kentucky Protection & Advocacy	KY
Disability Law Center (of Massachusetts)	MA
The Arc of Massachusetts	MA
Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee Massachusetts	MA
Lichtenstein Creative Media, Inc.	MA
LDA of St. Mary's County	MD
Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education	MD
Maryland Disability Law Center	MD
Maryland Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities	MD
Parent Advocacy Network for Differently-Abled	MD
Maine Developmental Disabilities Council	ME
Disability Rights Center Maine	ME
Maine Parent Federation, Inc.	ME
Michigan Alliance for Special Education	MI
Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards	MI
Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council	MI
Michigan Disability Rights Coalition	MI
The Arc Michigan	MI
The Arc of Northwest Wayne County	MI
The Respect ABILITY Law Center	MI
Autism Society of Minnesota	MN
Minnesota Disability Law Center of Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid (Minnesota Protection & Advocacy Center)	MN

Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities	MN
Minnesota State Council on Disability	MN
The Arc Minnesota	MN
Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council	MO
Down Syndrome Association of Greater St. Louis	MO
The Arc of Mississippi	MS
Disability Rights Mississippi	MS
Just Advocacy of Mississippi	MS
Mississippi Center for Justice	MS
Mississippi Families as Allies	MS
Mississippi Psychiatric Association	MS
Parents United Together	MS
ADAPT Montana	MT
Parents, Let's Unite for Kids - PLUK	MT
Disability Rights North Carolina	NC
Council for Children's Rights	NC
Monarch/The Arc of Stanly County	NC
Tammy Lynn Center for Developmental Disabilities	NC
The Arc of Davidson County, North Carolina	NC
Education Law Center	NJ
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network	NJ
Disability Rights New Jersey	NJ
The Arc of New Jersey	NJ
Epilepsy Foundation of New Jersey	NJ
Family Voices New Jersey	NJ
Learning Disabilities Association of New Jersey	NJ
New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc.	NJ
New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education, Inc.	NJ
New Jersey Special Education Practitioners	NJ
New Jersey PTA	NJ
NJ Association of School Psychologists (NJASP)	NJ
Autism Family Services of New Jersey	NJ
Special Education Leadership Council of NJ	NJ
Total Living Center, Inc.	NJ
Advocacy for Children with dis-Abilities	NM
Pegasus Legal Services for Children	NM
The Center for Self Determination	NV
New York State Independent Living Council	NY
Everyone Reading, Inc.	NY
Independent Living Center of the Hudson Valley Inc. (ILCHV)	NY
Independent Living Inc.	NY

Jonathan Carey Foundation	NY
NYSARC	NY
Southern Tier ADAPT	NY
Southern Tier Independence Center	NY
The Arc of Ohio	OH
The Arc of Pennsylvania	PA
Rhode Island Parent Information Network	RI
Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities - South Carolina	SC
The Arc of South Carolina	SC
The Arc of Pickens County, SC	SC
Camp T.A.L.K.	SC
The Arc Tennessee	TN
The Arc of Davidson County, Tennessee	TN
Texas Network of Youth Services	TX
DFW Interfaith Coffee House	TX
Special Needs Resource Project	UT
The Arc of Virginia	VA
Endependence Center, Inc.	VA
Legal Aid Justice Center, JustChildren Program	VA
Virginia Association of Centers for Independent Living	VA
The Arc of Central Virginia	VA
The Arc of Northern Virginia	VA
Autism Society of Northern Virginia	VA
Autism Society of Central Virginia	VA
disAbility Resource Center	VA
PELE Special Education Advocacy Clinic, William & Mary Law School	VA
Medical Home Plus, Inc.	VA
Disability Law Project of Vermont Legal Aid, Inc.	VT
The Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights	VT
Disability Rights Vermont	VT
PAVE – Partnerships for Action, Voices for Empowerment	WA
Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council	WA
Autism Society of Washington	WA
Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training and Support, Inc. (WI FACETS)	WI
Parents Helping Parents of WY, Inc	WY