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for Mental Health Law  
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Nov. 8, 2013

Dear Senator Flake:

The Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law urges you to support ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The Bazelon Center is a national non-profit legal advocacy organization that promotes equal opportunities for individuals with mental disabilities in all aspects of society, including community living, housing, employment, health care, education, voting rights, parental and family rights, and other areas.

The CRPD is a non-discrimination treaty designed to achieve goals similar to those of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act, and other federal disability rights laws in United States: to empower individuals with disabilities to achieve economic self-sufficiency, independent living, inclusion and integration into all aspects of society. The CRPD is important to all people with disabilities, including our veterans and service members with disabilities, as it requires equal treatment and non-discrimination in access to health care, employment, educational and other opportunities.

By ratifying the CRPD, the United States will continue to be a leader in setting the standards for ensuring the human rights of individuals with disabilities, as we have under the ADA, IDEA, and other laws. The Convention reflects core American values such as the dignity of the individual, access to justice, the importance of family decision-making and access to appropriate healthcare.

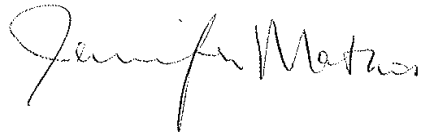
Ratifying the CRPD will ensure that the United States can provide and influence guidance on the implementation of the treaty around the world and lend our expertise as more countries develop their own disability rights laws. Such leadership will not only further our nation's vision for global human rights, but assist the millions of people with disabilities from the United States such as military veterans, students, scientists, tourists and business leaders, and their families who live, do business, and travel abroad. American citizens with disabilities should have the same opportunity to benefit from a world economy that is fully accessible to all people.

The Bazelon Center is committed to US leadership on behalf of people with disabilities worldwide. We believe swift US ratification of the CRPD in a bipartisan fashion is in this country's best interest and ask you for your support

and leadership on this issue.

If you have additional questions, please contact me at [jenniferm@bazelon.org](mailto:jenniferm@bazelon.org) or 202-467-5730 ext. 313.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Mathis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jennifer Mathis  
Director of Programs