



October 31, 2013

Hon. Chairman Robert Menendez
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
528 Senate Hart Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Hon. Ranking Member Bob Corker
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
425 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20510

Dear Chairman Menendez and Ranking Member Corker:

I write on behalf of GlobalSolutions.org and our 58,000 members in support of United States ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). We are pleased that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is holding hearings on CRPD and submit this letter of support for the hearing record.

The CRPD is a non-discrimination treaty that seeks to ensure countries across the globe provide people with disabilities with the same rights as everyone else, so that they can live full, satisfying and productive lives. This global treaty was inspired by and embodies the bedrock American ideals that form the basis of the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and other existing disability laws in the United States. These principles, so important to us as an organization dedicated to a more cooperative and responsible U.S. role in the world, include non-discrimination, equality, inclusion in society, accessibility and respect for the inherent dignity of all persons, including persons with disabilities.

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 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.

CRPD ratification is not just the right thing to do; it is the smart thing to do. According to the latest census data, close to 60 million or 18.7 percent of all Americans have some type of disability. CRPD ratification will not only enable U.S. global leadership, it will help to empower these millions of Americans, particularly veterans, business leaders, scientists, students and other disabled Americans who seek to live, work or travel abroad to engage in global commerce more effectively throughout the world, benefiting their lives and the U.S. economy.

There is broad bipartisan support for the CRPD. Under President Bush, the U.S. government participated throughout the drafting process between 2002 and 2006, and in 2007 voted "yes" in the General Assembly to adopt the treaty. It was under President Obama's orders that Ambassador Susan Rice signed

the treaty in July 2009; a subsequent transmittal package for ratification was sent to the Senate in May 2012. The transmittal package includes an exhaustive review of U.S. law, applies standard treaty practices employed in past successful ratifications, and proposes that ratification require no change to U.S. law when accompanied by the nine reservations, understandings, and declarations (RUDs) contained in the package. The treaty received bipartisan support from such political stalwarts as former Senator John Kerry (D-MA), Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), former Senator Bob Dole (R-KS), Senator John McCain (R-AZ), and Senator John Barrasso (R-WY). Despite this sizable and venerable group of CRPD supporters, the opposition launched a vitriolic, untruth-filled campaign that smeared, mischaracterized, and blatantly lied about the treaty and its effects on the United States.

GlobalSolutions.org is concerned that the United States' failure to accede to any multilateral treaties* in recent years is a detriment to our nation's economy, security and global leadership. It is our hope that the deliberate gross distortions of the truth designed to enflame and confuse that characterized CRPD's defeat in 2012 will not be repeated in 2013. For more information on this I refer you to the attached white paper "[Birth Of A "Big Lie" How Misinformation Fuels Treaty Opposition: A Disability Treaty Case Study](#)", which I request be read into the hearing record.

If you have additional questions, please contact me at dkraus@globalsolutions.org , or 202-330-4103.

Sincerely,



Don Kraus
President & CEO

CC: Senate Foreign Relations Committee Members

*1997, Chemical Weapons Convention; 2001, Suppression of Terrorist Bombings; and 2002, Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism