



Independent Marylanders Achieving Growth through Empowerment
300 E Joppa Road Suite 302 Towson Maryland 21286
P/TTY 410.982.6311 Fax 410.372.4037
www.imagemd.org info@imagemd.org
Michael Bullis, Executive Director

November 1, 2013

Dear Senator:

The IMAGE Center for People with Disabilities is writing in support of ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The CRPD is a non-discrimination treaty seeking to achieve the same goals as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other existing disability laws in the 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 veterans and service members with disabilities, because it embodies equal treatment and non-discrimination in access to rehabilitation, employment and educational opportunities.

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

Through these mechanisms, the United States can 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 and their families who travel and do business abroad, such as military veterans, students, scientists, tourists and business leaders. American citizens with disabilities should have equal opportunity to benefit from a world economy that is fully accessible to all people.

The IMAGE Center is committed to US leadership on behalf of the 1 billion people with disabilities worldwide. We believe swift US ratification of the CRPD in a bipartisan manner is in this country's best interest and we ask you for your support and leadership on this issue.

If you have additional questions, please contact me at mbullis@imagemd.org or [443-275-9394](tel:443-275-9394).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michael Bullis".

Michael Bullis
Executive Director,
The IMAGE Center for People with Disabilities