International Children with Disabilities Protection Act of 2023

According to the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), there are at least 240,000,000 children and youth with disabilities in the world, including approximately 53,000,000 children under age 5. Millions of children are placed in residential institutions and most of those children are left to grow up without the love, support, and guidance of a family. The vast majority of children placed in residential institutions have at least one living parent or have extended family, many of whom would keep their children if they had the support and legal protections necessary to do so.

Advocacy by people with disabilities and their families has been essential to reforming our own social service systems. Throughout the world, organizations of people with disabilities and family members are eager bring about change in their own society. A small investment to support and train advocacy groups will have a big impact to ensure that children with disabilities have the opportunity to live and grow up with their families – and transition to an independent life in the community.

The “International Children with Disabilities Protection Act” (H.R. 5847) would establish a grant-making fund within the U.S. Department of State to:

--- create a small grants program to support leadership and advocacy by people with disabilities and their families to protect full inclusion of children with disabilities in society and to prevent unnecessary institutionalization;
--- promote advocacy skills and leadership by people with disabilities and family members of the children and youth with disabilities so that such individuals can participate in their local, regional, and national governments to bring about policy reforms, legal protections, and programs to support family inclusion of children with disabilities;
--- promote laws, policies, and funding programs that strengthen families and protect against institutionalization of children with disabilities;
--- assist countries abroad in developing policies and social supports to protect families and ensure full inclusion of children with disabilities.

Here is the link to read the Bill:
List of current co-sponsors:
https://www.billtrack50.com/billdetail/1643629
The legislation would authorize $2,000,000 for fiscal year 2024 and $5,000,000 annually for years 2025 to 2029 to the Department of State’s Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor to award grants to leading civil society groups with expertise in global disability rights, prioritizing sub-grants awarded to organizations led by persons with disabilities. Of the amount authorized, $3,000,000 annually for years 2025 to 2029 will be provided to NGOs to develop capacity-building programs for disability leaders, legislators, policymakers, and service providers. The legislation will create programs to train policymakers, activists, and other individuals on successful models of reform, services and rights protection to ensure that children with disabilities can live and grow up with families and become full participants in society.

We are seeking your help with endorsements for this reintroduced legislation.

Please contact us if you would like your organization removed from the list.

For more information, please contact:

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List of Endorsing Organizations (as of 1/20/23)

Disability Rights International
United States International Council on Disabilities
Able South Carolina (South Carolina)
Access Ready
ANCOR
American Academy of Pediatrics
ANCOR
APNI, Inc. (Puerto Rico)
Association for Special Children & Families (New Jersey)
Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE)
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Autism Society of America
Autistic People of Color Fund
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network
Basic Education Coalition
Be Stronger Together Coaching
Beach Center on Disability, University of Kansas
Bethany Christian Services (Tennessee)
Catholic Charities Disabilities Services
Catholic Relief Services
ChildFund International
Community Options, Inc.
Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates (COPAA)
CURE International
Disability Action Center - NW, Inc. (Idaho)
Disability Inclusive Development Programs and Services - DIDEPA
Disability Network Southwest Michigan
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund (California)
Disability Rights Fund (DRF)
Disability Rights Legal Center (California)
Disabled Children's Fund
Dravet Syndrome Foundation
Early Childhood Development Community
Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living (Oregon)
Education for All Coalition
Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC)
Family Network on Disabilities of Florida
Family Voices NJ (New Jersey)
Federation for Children with Special Needs (Massachusetts)
First Focus on Children
Florida Association of Centers for Independent Living (Florida)
Global Campaign for Education-US
Global Disability Inclusion (Florida)
Global Partners United
Humanity & Inclusion
Idaho Parents Unlimited (Idaho)
INCLUDEnyc (New York)
Institute for Human Centered Design
InterAction
International Competition for Writers with Disabilities (Arizona)
International Youth Foundation (IYF)
Keystone Human Services International
Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)
Kupenda for the Children
Lane Independent Living Alliance (LILA) (Oregon)
Living Independence Network Corporation (Idaho)
Long Island Advocacy Center, Inc. (New York)
Maestral International (Minnesota)
Maine Parent Federation (Maine)
Makom
Metropolitan Parent Center, Sinergia Inc (New York)
Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (Michigan)
Mobility International USA
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Council on Independent Living
National Military Family Association
National Respite Coalition
New Jersey Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies, Inc. (New Jersey)
North Texas Disability Chamber (Texas)
Not Dead Yet
Partnership for Early Childhood Development & Disability Rights (PECDDR)
PEAK Parent Center
Placer Independent Resource Services (California)
Progress Center for Independent Living
Refresh Mobility (California)
Resources for Independent Living, Inc. (New Jersey)
RISE Institute
Save the Children
SIL LEAD, Inc. (Texas)
Southeast Kansas Independent Living (Kansas)
SPAN Parent Advocacy Network (New Jersey)
Special Olympics USA
SPoon
Stone Soup Group (Alaska)
Tamir Welfare Organization CIC
TASH
Tennessee Disability Coalition (Tennessee)
The Ability Center (Ohio)
The Arc of NJ (New Jersey)
The Arc of Northern Virginia (Virginia)
The Arc of the United States
The Center for Independent Living, Inc. (California)
The Parents’ Place of MD (Maryland)
The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies
The Whole Person (Missouri & Kansas)
TSC Alliance
UNICEF USA
Uplift International
Wheelchairs for Kids International (Texas)
Workability International
World Education
World Hope International
World Institute on Disability
World Vision
Worldreader