



May 14, 2026

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito

Chair

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education,
and Related Agencies
170 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Aderholt

Chair

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies
272 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin

Ranking Member

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education,
and Related Agencies
141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro

Ranking Member

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

**Re: Support for FY 2027 Funding for Rehabilitation and Disability Research at
NIDILRR and Related Programs within the Administration for Community Living**

Dear Chairs Moore Capito and Aderholt and Ranking Members Baldwin and DeLauro:

On behalf of the disability and rehabilitation research community, the undersigned individuals, organizations, and institutions ***urge you to fund the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) at \$150 million in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027*** Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. We believe that a \$150 million investment in NIDILRR is a long-overdue and necessary increase to strengthen the nation's disability and rehabilitation research infrastructure and advance outcomes for people with disabilities.

NIDILRR plays a unique and critical role within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) by serving as the federal government's primary research agency focused on improving the lives of people with disabilities. Its mission—to generate new knowledge and improve outcomes through improved health and function, ability to return to work, and independent living—is unique within the federal government and not duplicated by any other agency. Through its support of rehabilitation research, capacity-building centers, TBI, SCI, and burn model systems,

and developing accessible technologies and knowledge translation—NIDILRR drives innovation in health, employment, housing, and community living for people with disabilities across the lifespan.

We are grateful for Congress' decision to fully fund NIDILRR in FY 2026, but when adjusted for inflation, NIDILRR's current budget supports far less research capacity than it did a decade ago. To adequately address the growing demand for community-based and data-driven disability research, and to support the next generation of disability researchers, we urge Congress to enact a long-overdue funding increase to \$150 million annually. This investment is critical to ensuring that research keeps pace with the evolving needs of the disability community, supports improvement in outcomes, and upholds the ultimate promise of the Americans with Disabilities Act¹ and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973², as amended.

The DRRC also supports full funding of programs under the Administration for Community Living that are complimentary of the research funded through NIDILRR, including the Limb Loss Resource Center, the Paralysis Resource Center, the Traumatic Brain Injury State Grant program, and the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities. These programs are critical for the disability communities they serve.

We appreciate your continued leadership and commitment to advancing disability and rehabilitation research.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Disability and Rehabilitation Research Coalition (DRRC) Members

Alliance for NIDILRR Grantees*

Academy of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals

American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

American Association on Health & Disability*

American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine*

American Occupational Therapy Association*

American Physical Therapy Association*

American Spinal Injury Association

¹ *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*. 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101-12213.

² *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*. 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.

American Therapeutic Recreation Association
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Brain Injury Association of America*
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
National Association for the Advancement of Orthotics and Prosthetics
RESNA
Spina Bifida Association
United Spinal Association
VisionServe Alliance

DRRC Steering Committee Member*

Additional Supporting Organizations

Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals
Allies for Independence
American Parkinson Disease Association
Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired
Autism Society of America
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Beyond The Box Advocacy
Burn Survivors of New England
CommunicationFIRST
Consortium of MS Centers
Cornell University, Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability
COVID-19 Longhauler Advocacy Project
Craig Hospital
Easterseals, Inc.
Indiana University School of Medicine
International Organization of MS Nurses
Lakeshore Foundation
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys
National Health Law Program
The Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies
Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors
Social Work Disability Justice League
The University of Florida
The University of Missouri-Kansas City's Institute for Human Development
The University of Pittsburgh
The University of Texas at San Antonio
Vanderbilt Health

Supporting Individuals

Adjoa Manu
Portland, OR

Aidan Brown
Farmville, VA

Alexandra Reyes
Chicago, IL

Alianna Higgins, MPH
Boston, MA

Alicia Koontz
Pittsburgh, PA

Allison Rapp
Lithia, FL

Amanda Krupa
Lemont, IL

Amanda Lindsey
Covington, LA

Amber Hill
Augusta, GA

Amelia Ray
Birmingham, AL

Amy Hartman
Pittsburgh, PA

Amy Hecht-Zizes
Ann Arbor, MI

Amy Hewitt
Minneapolis, MN

Andre Boudreaux
Oakland Park, FL

Andrew Sprague
Pittsburgh, PA

Andrew Tom
White Plains, NY

Angelle Sander
Houston, Texas

Anjay Khandelwal
Akron, OH

Anna Quon
Boise, ID

Ashley Murphy
Detroit, MI

Barbara S. Bregman
Washington, DC

Bi-Ying Yeh
Orange, CA

Bill McGehee
Fort Valley, GA

Brick Johnstone
Atlanta, GA

Candy Tefertiller
Denver, CO

Carol Haywood
Chicago, IL

Ceren Yarar-Fisher
Columbus, OH

Deandra Butler
Kansas City, MO

Charles H. Bombardier, PhD
Bainbridge Island, WA

Delphine Labbé
Chicago, IL

Christi Van Heulen
Grand Rapids, MI

Dennis Compton
Mesa, AZ

Christine Busse
Prospect Heights, IL

Deron P. Wilson
McDonough, GA

Colleen Ryan
Winchester, MA

Diana Tenney-Laperriere
Clarksville, TN

Dana Arnold
Gainesville, FL

Dmitry Esterov
Rochester, MN

Dana Kobrin
Baltimore, MD

Dot Nary PhD
Lawrence, KS

Dana Waltzman
Indianapolis, IN

Elizabeth R. Skidmore
Pittsburgh, PA

Danelle Heathman
Mandeville, LA

Erica Twardzik
Ann Arbor, MI

Daniel Carmines
Kennedale, TX

Erika Trovato
White Plains, NY

Daniel Cochrane
Chicago, IL

Erin Thorn
Monrovia, CA

Danielle Perret Karimi
Irvine, CA

Evan Zeldin
Cincinnati, OH

David Greenhalgh
Davis, CA

Flora Hammond, MD
Carmel, IN

Gale Whiteneck
Colorado Springs, CO

Gayathri Rajagopal
Morris Plains, NJ

Guang Yue, PhD
West Orange, NJ

Haris Choudry
White Plains, NY

Heather Becker
Austin, TX

Heather Warren
Coventry, RI

Heba Zoaeir
West Orange, NJ

Hellen Douglas
Lima, OH

Hope Sparks
Chicago, IL

Ilhom Akobirshoev
Waltham, MA

Inthira Chompranouvong
Martinsburg, WV

Isaac Adusu
Worcester, MA

Jaime Hoza
La Plata, MD

James Goodwin
Woodridge, IL

James Thomas
Salem, IN

Jamie Kulzer
Pittsburgh, PA

Jamie Ott
Seattle, WA

Jasmine May
Columbus, OH

Jean P. Hall
Olathe, KS

Jeanne M. Hoffman
Seattle, WA

Jeffrey Schneider
Cambridge, MA

Jenn Coker
Birmingham, AL

Jenn Raley Miller
Rancho Cordova, CA

Jennifer
Birmingham, AL

Jerri Davidson
Greenville, SC

Jessica Kersey
St. Louis, MO

Jessica Williams
St. Louis, MO

Kim Barker
Dallas, TX

Jill Bezyak
Fort Collins, CO

Kimberly Anderson, PhD
Cleveland, OH

John Latorre
Birmingham, AL

Kristen Dams-O'Connor
New York, NY

Joy Hammel
Chicago, IL

Laura Horvath
Cary, NC

Julia VanderMolen
Grand Rapids, MI

Laurin Bixby
Philadelphia, PA

Justin Huber
Indianapolis, IN

Leah Roth
Columbus, OH

Kara McMullen
Portland, OR

Leslie Caplan
Chevy Chase, MD

Katherine Froehlich-Grobe
Parker, CO

Lida Basir
New York, NY

Kathleen Murphy
Austin, TX

Lisa Staton
Chesterfield, VA

Katlin Schultz
Gahanna, OH

Lissette Monarque
Redondo Beach, CA

Kechi Okwuchi
Fresno TX

Lynn Worobey
Oakmont, PA

Keith C. Bock
Honeoye Falls, NY

Maria Liera
Imperial, CA

Kelsey Zionskowski
Portland, OR

Marissa Lundstern
Englewood, CO

Martha Wetzel
Atlanta, GA

Rachel Kudlak
Charleston, SC

Marvia Cunanan
San Luis Obispo, CA

Radhika Malhotra
Melville, NY

Mary Goldberg
Pittsburgh, PA

Radhika Sharma
Birmingham, AL

Matthew Cylla
Northville, MI

Raj Kumar
Yardley, PA

Matthew Farrow
Columbus, OH

Robert Lyon
Beaver, PA

Melissa Durochez
Cleveland, TX

Robert Scot Bush
Gainesville, FL

Melissa Levin
Boston, MA

Robin Hanks
Pleasant Ridge, MI

Mustafa Rfat
St. Louis, MO

Rosemary Hughes
Missoula, MT

Nancy Cheak-Zamora
San Antonio, TX

Ruby Siegel
Sommerville, MA

Nandita Keole
Scottsdale, AZ

Russ Sanders
Louisville, KY

Patricia M. West
East Lansing, MI

Ryan Riss
Portland, OR

Patrick Sparto
Wexford, PA

Sandeep Subramanian
San Antonio, TX

Phillip Boda
Chicago, IL

Sarah Taylor
Alameda, CA

Scott R Olsen
Valrico, FL

Syreeta Nolan
San Diego, CA

Shanna Katz Kattari
Ann Arbor, MI

Tamar Heller
Chicago, IL

Shannon Juengst
Houston, TX

The Rev. Susan Barnes
Newport, RI

Shanti Pinto, MD, MSCS
Cambridge, MA

Tiffany Gilmore
Zionsville, PA

Sharon Mosely
White Plains, NY

Tina Barham
Martinsville, IN

Shelly Hsieh
West Harrison, NY

Tracey Lane
Baltimore, MD

Simon Driver
Boston, MA

Tyler G. James
Ann Arbor, MI

Sonal Sathe
Tallahassee, FL

Tyra Bergstrom
Chicago, IL

Sonya R Pearson
Akron, OH

Valerie Chavez-Arom
Orange, CA

Steve Gardner
Taylors, SC

Vincent Ornelas, MSW PhD
Chico, CA

Steven Erickson
Livonia, MI

Vu Nguyen
Birmingham, AL

Susan Idol
Waitsfield, VT

Walter R. Frontera
San Juan, PR

Susan Robinson-Whelen
Houston, TX

Wendy Beukelman
Thornton, CO

Whitney Luke
Columbus, OH

Yelena Bodien
Nashville, TN

Yuying Chen
Birmingham, AL

Zachary Kurtz
Ann Arbor, MI

Zachary Morris
Brooklyn, NY