



Easter Seals

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October 30, 2013

The Honorable Glenn Thompson
United States House of Representatives
123 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
United States House of Representatives
237 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Thompson and Pallone:

Easter Seals is proud to support the Special Needs Trust Fairness Act of 2013 (H.R. 2123). This legislation would empower individuals with disabilities to help plan and save for their future daily living expenses by allowing them to set up a special needs trust for themselves, which is prevented under current law.

Easter Seals is a national nonprofit organization that provides individualized services and supports to help people with disabilities or special needs and their families reach their potential. Through our network of 72 community-based affiliates, including Easter Seals Western Pennsylvania and Easter Seals New York in your districts, Easter Seals assisted more than 1.4 million individuals and their families last year through community-based services, including medical rehabilitation, employment, child care, adult and senior services, caregiving, and camping and recreation.

Easter Seals understands how important access to quality services and long-term supports are for individuals with disabilities. One tool to help ensure individuals with disabilities have access to these essential services and support beyond what is available through the government is through a special needs trust. Currently, a special needs trust can be created for a person with a disability by family members, a guardian or the court. Unfortunately, current law prevents people with disabilities from creating their own special needs trust for their asset, which can later be used to supplement living expenses and care when government benefits alone are insufficient. This legislation would remove this barrier, giving individuals with disabilities direct access to a current tool that can help them live independently and improve their health and well-being.

Thank you for your leadership. Easter Seals looks forward to working with you on passage of the Special Needs Trust Fairness Act of 2013.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katy Beh Neas".

Katy Beh Neas
Senior Vice President, Government Relations