

June 22, 2009

The Honorable Anna Eshoo
United States House of Representatives
205 Cannon Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Via Fax: 202-225-8890

RE: HR 1085 - Support

Dear Congresswoman Eshoo:

We are writing on behalf of the Disability Rights Legal Center to thank you for sponsoring the Health Insurance Coverage Protection Act (HR 1085), which will restrict health plans from imposing lifetime aggregate limits.

Through our Cancer Legal Resource Center (CLRC), we have unique knowledge and experience with laws and legislation that impact the rights of individuals diagnosed with cancer, cancer survivors, caregivers, healthcare professionals, and employers across the country.

By way of introduction, the Disability Rights Legal Center (DRLC) has worked to implement the civil rights of people with disabilities for over 30 years. We are the oldest cross-disability legal advocacy organization in the country. Our mission is to promote the rights of people with disabilities and the public interest in, and awareness of, those rights by providing legal and related services.

The CLRC, a national, joint program of the DLRC and Loyola Law School, has provided over 120,000 people with free and confidential information and resources on cancer-related legal issues, including access to care, insurance, government benefits, estate planning, and employment. Please visit www.CancerLegalResourceCenter.org for more information.

Last year, we received over 5,000 calls from people coping with a cancer diagnosis with questions about cancer-related legal issues. Over 23% of those calls were about getting or keeping health insurance after a cancer diagnosis, or navigating managed care. Access to insurance for people with cancer is often directly linked to their survival rate.

Allowing health insurance companies to continue to limit the amount of coverage through the imposition of lifetime spending caps, often forces people in need of health care to forego treatment or to resist treatment—until it is too late. Denying people access to care through lifetime insurance coverage limits is unacceptable.

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The DRLC strongly supports HR 1085, and we look forward to working with you to ensure the passage of this bill. In addition, as Congress moves forward with discussions on how to reform our nation's healthcare system, we urge you to champion the inclusion of the principles in HR 1085 in any health care reform proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, or if there is anything that we can do to ensure that people with are no longer restricted by lifetime aggregate limits in health insurance.

Sincerely,



Paula D. Pearlman, Esq.
Executive Director,
Disability Rights Legal Center



Joanna L. Morales, Esq.
Director,
Cancer Legal Resource Center