December 1, 2011

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky
United States House of Representatives
Rayburn House Office Building, 2367
Washington, DC 20515-1309

Dear Representative Schakowsky:

On behalf of Advance CLASS, Inc. and the national aging and disability organizations who support CLASS, we would like to formally thank you for your vote against the legislation, H.R. 1173, to repeal the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS) Act at yesterday’s House Energy and Commerce Committee mark-up. We truly appreciate and commend you for your understanding of the need for long-term supports and services (LTSS).

In 2008, 21 million people had a condition that caused them to need help with their health and personal care. Medicare does not cover LTSS, yet about 70 percent of people over the age of 65 will require some sort of LTSS at a point in their lifetime. In addition, almost 40 percent of individuals who need services are under age 65 and LTSS can enable these individuals to work and be productive citizens in their communities.

Regardless of when individuals may need these services, there is a lack of financing options to help them plan and pay for services they need to help them live independently in their homes and communities. The CLASS program could give millions of working Americans a new option to take personal responsibility and help plan and pay for essential services they may need now or in the future. As you know, this issue affects the constituents of every U.S. Representative.

Again, we thank you for your commitment to the program and we urge continued dialogue and the development of a viable path forward.

Sincerely,

AARP
AFSCME
Alzheimer’s Association
Alzheimer’s Foundation of America (AFA)
American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR)
The American Society on Aging
The Arc of the United States
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP)
Autism National Committee (AutCom)
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Brain Injury Association of America
California Foundation for Independent Living Centers
Council for Exceptional Children
Direct Care Alliance
Easter Seals
The Jewish Federations of North America
LeadingAge
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)
National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care
National Council on Aging (NCOA)
The National Council on Independent Living (NCIL)
National Disability Rights Network
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
Paralyzed Veterans of America
SEIU
United Cerebral Palsy (UCP)