

NAPAS

National Association of Protection & Advocacy Systems

August 18, 1999

The Honorable John D. Dingell
2328 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Re: Support Letter for H.R. 2723: The Bipartisan Consensus Managed Care
Act of 1999**

Dear Congressman Dingell,

The National Association of Protection and Advocacy Services, Inc. strongly supports H.R. 2723, *The Bipartisan Consensus Managed Care Act of 1999*, and the bipartisan efforts that you have undertaken to construct this strong patient protection legislation. H.R. 2723 includes a number of provisions that are particularly important to children and adults with disabilities and their families.

- Access to specialty care, including the opportunity to have a specialist as the gatekeeper or a standing referral for individuals with "ongoing special conditions". Ongoing special condition is defined as a "condition or disease that is life-threatening, degenerative, or disabling and requires specialized medical care over time".
- Continuity of care protections so that individuals with ongoing special conditions can continue to see their provider for a set period of time if, for some reason, the provider is no longer part of the plan.
- Access to prescription drugs not in a plan's formulary if it is shown that a drug, other than those offered by the plan, is medically indicated.
- Access to an independent external appeals process that leaves decision making up to health care professionals and not insurance companies;
- Access to fair remedies if a health plan decision causes harm.

Congress should consider and pass this piece of legislation rapidly in September. NAPAS looks forward to working with your office in the future both on disability and health care issues.

Sincerely,


Curt Decker
Executive Director