



August 24, 2021

Representative Chris Smith
2373 Rayburn Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Smith:

On behalf of the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN), I would like to thank you for introducing the Real Emergency Access for Aging and Disability Inclusion for Disasters Act (READI Act) H.R. 4938. This piece of legislation will work to provide long-needed services for people with disabilities before, during, and after disasters.

NDRN is the voluntary membership association for Protection and Advocacy (P&A) agencies. The P&A agencies are a nationwide network of congressionally mandated, cross disability organizations operating in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Territories (American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and the US Virgin Islands). There is also a P&A affiliated with the Native American Consortium which includes the Hopi, Navajo, and San Juan Southern Paiute Nations located in the Four Corners region of the Southwest.

People with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by such crises. Emergency Management Systems often do not have policies put into place to accommodate residents with disabilities, and many of the P&As routinely work on emergency management services for their residents. The training and technical assistance provided under the READI Act will better equip state and local services to better accommodate disaster victims during major disasters.

Again, NDRN applauds the introduction of this important piece of legislation. We look forward to working with you to enact the bill. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Claire Stanley, Public Policy Analyst, at Claire.Stanley@ndrn.org.

Sincerely,

Curtis L. Decker
Executive Director
National Disability Rights Network