

To: NCIL Membership

From: Personal Assistance Services Sub-Committee

Date: October 29, 2001

RE: MiCASSA Update

America lost its innocence on September 11, 2001. Every time a plane flies overhead for a long time to come, many of us will look up. For a long time we will be looking at strangers and wondering. We will never again believe we are impenetrable. We will never forget the events of that day and we will never be the same. Now, we must move forward.

We must continue our work and continue the advocacy for the freedom of people to choose where they live and receive support services. We must continue our advocacy for MiCASSA S.1298. There are still thousands who's lives will probably change little or not at all. People in nursing homes will continue to be warehoused with no real choice for community services.

As America adjusts to the new political priorities, our message must not be lost. As America adjusts and lives resume, we must not forget about those whose lives continue to be limited to a bed, a dresser and more of the same the day after day. We must not forget that without our advocacy, Congress and administration may forget our brothers and sisters who continue to be institutionalized in nursing homes! MiCASSA, S. 1298 will continue the reform of the long-term care system. MiCASSA S.1298, along with the implementation of the Olmstead decision, will give people with disabilities real choice. MiCASSA S.1298 will continue the real choice systems change grants that will give states the planning money to institute the system changes necessary to bring our people home. It will begin to give Americans a real choice about where they spend their lives. Colleague's Senator Thad Cochran, Senator Debbie Stabenow and just recently Senator Mary Landrieu have joined Senator Tom Harkin and Senator Arlen Specter, Senator Ted Kennedy, Senator Joseph Biden and Senator Hillary Clinton in co-sponsoring MiCASSA. We need you to get your Senators to co-sponsor MiCASSA S.1298.

As we've mentioned in the past, the organizational supports are pouring in, but there is always room for more. Attached is a copy of the MiCASSA talking points, summary and supporter form. A complete list of organizational supporters can be found at the ADAPT website at www.adapt.org, as well as a copy of the actual legislation. This vital systems change legislation could end a fear all Americans still face and that is the fear of being locked away in a nursing home some day. Work for the passage of MiCASSA and the freedom of our people. Work to really make a difference in America!