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ADAP Advocacy Association Urges U.S. Senate to Ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities

For Immediate Release

WASHINGTON, D.C. (November 20, 2013) – The [ADAP Advocacy Association](http://www.adapadvocacyassociation.org), also known as **aaa+**[®], today urged the United States Senate to Ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD). The purpose of the CRPD is “to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.”

“Despite 30 years after the HIV/AIDS epidemic first surfaced, we still have people living with HIV infection being stigmatized, discriminated against, denied access to treatment and in some cases even killed over their status,” said **Brandon M. Macsata**, CEO of the ADAP Advocacy Association. “The ADAP Advocacy Association believes that important domestic and international laws, such as the Ryan White CARE Act and the President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief, respectively, would be strengthened by the Senate voting to approve the treaty. Our elected officials have a unique opportunity to send a message that people with disabilities – including people living with HIV/AIDS – deserve to be afforded equal protection under the law.”

The U.S. Senate failed to ratify the CRPD late last year, falling just four votes shy of the necessary two-thirds majority needed to approve it. The U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations recently took up the treaty again, and there exists an opportunity to pass the treaty this year.

“138 countries have already ratified the treaty, but protections won't come automatically,” argued **Sen. Robert Menendez** (D-NJ), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. “It will take U.S. ratification and U.S. leadership to ensure the treaty's protections not only become a reality, but reflect American values.”

The Convention adopts a social model of disability, and defines disability as including “*those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.*”

Said **John D. Kemp**, President & CEO of The Viscardi Center and founding **aaa+**[®] board member, “Help us by endorsing this non-discrimination treaty as it seeks to achieve the same goals as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other existing disability laws in the United States that empower individuals with disabilities to achieve economic self-sufficiency, independent living, inclusion and integration into all aspects of society.”

The Convention can be read online at <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>.

To learn more about the ADAP Advocacy Association or its endorsement of the CRPD, please contact Brandon M. Macsata by phone at (305) 519-4256 or email at info@adapadvocacyassociation.org.

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