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February 9, 2009

U.S. House of Representatives

Re: S.22 – The Omnibus Public Land Management Act and the Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Act

Dear Representative:

On behalf of Unite 2 Fight Paralysis and the millions of Americans living with paralysis, I ask you to please support the passage of the *Omnibus Public Land Management Act*, S.22. The *Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Act* (CDRPA), is included in S.22, which will come up for a vote in the House this week. Unite 2 Fight Paralysis and the paralysis community strongly urge your support for the passage of S.22 exactly the way it is written, and we ask that you please vote “No” on any Motion to Recommit.

Like most of the bills in S.22, the CDRPA was blocked by a Senatorial hold, even though the legislation is non-controversial, has nationwide support and has broad bi-partisan support in Congress. In fact, last October the CDRPA passed unanimously in the House of Representatives by voice vote. A second passage of the CDRPA this week will provide hope for millions of Americans, including our veterans, whose lives will be vastly improved by this powerful legislation.

The CDRPA is primarily about three things: promoting collaborative scientific research, advancing rehabilitation research, and improving the quality of life for people living with paralysis and mobility impairments from any cause. It is not disease specific; paralysis research will offer therapies and improve the quality of life for individuals surviving Spinal Cord Injuries, Traumatic Brain Injuries, Parkinson’s Disease, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), Stroke, Cerebral Palsy, Multiple Sclerosis, Spina Bifida, Transverse Myelitis and many other debilitating injuries and neurological conditions. The CDRPA encourages coordination of research to prevent redundancies and hasten discovery of better treatments and cures and, as importantly, to improve the daily lives today for those living with paralysis.

In this country, the costs associated with spinal cord injuries alone are over \$22 billion per year. The sooner curative and rehabilitation therapies go forward, the greater the long-term savings. In our current economic peril, a vote for the S.22 and the CDRPA is a strong statement promoting fiscal responsibility.

This week’s vote in the House on S.22 and the CDRPA is the culmination of over five years of advocacy by the paralysis community. With your support this week, this vital legislation will finally be sent to the President’s desk, and people living with paralysis nationwide will look forward to the promise of better treatments and cures. **We ask that you please stand up for these millions of Americans who can’t, by voting YES for S.22, the *Omnibus Public Land Management Act*, and NO on any Motion to Recommit or attempt to stall this legislation.** Please stand with us as we unite to fight paralysis and allow this life-changing piece of legislation to finally become law.

Sincerely,

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