

# NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY

*An Independent Federal Agency*

## FISCAL YEAR 2009 BUDGET JUSTIFICATION



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**FY 2008 BUDGET JUSTIFICATION**

**To**

**THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET**

**SEPTEMBER 2007**

**NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY  
FY 2009 Budget Justification**

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## INTRODUCTION

Following is the National Council on Disability's (NCD) budget justification for Fiscal Year (FY) 2009. NCD is requesting a total budget authority of \$3,756,945. The funding requested for FY 2009 will provide NCD with resources to carry out our specifically mandated responsibilities including to:

1. Hold quarterly Council meetings;
2. Prepare, for the President and Congress, the annual report entitled *National Disability Policy: A Progress Report*;
3. Carry out nine responsibilities with the FEMA director as prescribed in Public Law 109-295;
4. Provide compensation and travel reimbursement to Council members for each day they are engaged in the performance of their duties as members of the National Council on Disability;
5. Gather information about the implementation, effectiveness, and impact of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.);
- (6 ) Make recommendations to the President, the Congress and other officials of federal agencies or other federal entities, respecting ways to better promote the policies set forth in section 400(a)(2) of the enabling legislation;
7. Provide to the Congress on a continuing basis advice, recommendations, legislative proposals, and any additional information that the National Council on Disability or the Congress deems appropriate;
8. Conduct research and studies in order to review and evaluate the policies and programs of various federal agencies providing services to people with disabilities; and
9. Support the contractual obligations of NCD that fund its operational activities (i.e., salaries, benefits, legal services, administrative support (GSA), lease space, etc.) pursuant to the mission of the agency.

Despite the creation of several federal work incentive programs during the last decade, about 68 percent of working age Americans with significant disabilities remain unemployed. Our society needs to continue to seek out the best solutions for reducing reliance on benefit programs for those who should be employed, and also needs to enhance the ability to live independently so higher-cost "institutional" care can be avoided in every stage of life. NCD research into such issues will continue to identify

and improve the programs that can make such improvements a reality. In addition, as related below, NCD has been given substantial responsibilities for disability-related issues in the nationwide effort to improve emergency preparedness and enhance homeland security.

NCD's FY 2009 budget request is a moderate increase over its FY 2008 funding, which was \$3,113,000. At that level, NCD was forced to forego important research projects in order to fund increased fixed costs beyond our control. The additional funds requested for FY 2009 will allow NCD to sustain its statutory mandates to collect and evaluate information on federal disability policy and programs and to develop advice and recommendations to the President and Congress in promoting the full integration, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities.

Under President Bush, NCD has been prolific in producing timely information critical to improving the delivery of programs to people with disabilities. Our series of research reports involving *New Freedom Initiative* (NFI) programs has resulted in or documented ongoing changes to many of the critical services needed to sustain the health and independence of our most vulnerable citizens.

Like many federal agencies, NCD has been impacted by increased costs related to our mission. Unlike some larger agencies, NCD has limited opportunity to reduce such costs without hampering our ability to fulfill Congressional mandates as outlined in our authorizing legislation. An example of this situation can be found in the requirement that NCD meets a minimum of four times per year. During FY 2007, as part of the strategic refocusing by NCD to require more participation by appointed Council members in policy development and agency matters, NCD has incurred increased costs for member salaries, travel and meeting-related expenses. This level of investment in our mission has resulted in a dramatic increase in the levels of public participation and valuable feedback received at our public hearings and meetings held around the country. Consequently, NCD's expectation that costs related to meetings would increase have proven true, but have been offset by the value of public participation in agency processes, although that value is impossible to quantify.

Over the last several years, NCD has provided extensive and wide-ranging outreach to people with disabilities and members of their communities, closely consulting with them as key informants to NCD's policy work. Many NCD publications have resulted in repeated invitations to present their findings through conference presentations, Internet web casts, and policy briefings. A list of NCD publications, by category, is attached for your reference.

In addition to the mission-related expenses described above, NCD must fully fund its operational support and rental costs. The cost of contract services from the General Services Administration has increased by almost \$100,000 since FY 2006. The cost of

NCD's rental of office space has increased by \$60,000 during that same period. Additionally, the cost of accommodations, such as communication services, has increased by \$25,000 from previous fiscal years. These are a few examples of the increases NCD has been forced to absorb within a limited budget.

The rising cost of basic administrative expenses is weighing heavily on NCD, potentially necessitating a shift of dollars from mission-related work to cover those costs. NCD is taking many steps to control or reduce such costs. These include new cost controls related to printing, mailing, report dissemination and telecommunications. We have also reduced staffing, will postpone filling vacancies at lower salary grades, and are continually seeking methods to improve efficiency. NCD has become extremely efficient in the past four years, procuring only what is needed for mission-related tasks.

In 2009, NCD is scheduled to continue conducting research on several issues critical to people with disabilities. As a result of new duties for the Council that were assigned in the Homeland Security Appropriations bill (HR 5441) signed by President Bush on October 4, 2006, NCD continues to play a significant role in the many disability-related activities and issues related to homeland security. That role is described in more detail in the listing of Program Contracts to be accomplished in FY 2009.

In an environment where the needs of the community are changing, along with the fiscal pressures accompanying these changes, NCD must be well-situated to conduct research activities that will enable it to assist the Nation in charting its course in addressing these needs. In 2009, NCD is committed to a set of comprehensive projects focused on improving the lives of people with disabilities and increasing the public's awareness of the value of the programs that serve this "community." The policy issues to be examined (listed separately) will be studied from the vantage point of the vision of NCD's 15 members appointed by President Bush, and reflect the President's New Freedom Initiative targeted at people with disabilities.

The lower levels of funding NCD received in 2006, 2007 and 2008 required NCD to postpone or reduce in scope several critical research projects, including those involving poverty, asset accumulation and a project involving health care. The proposed 2009 reduction would affect NCD in the same manner, in that the agency would need to eliminate or diminish some of its 2009 research commitments in order to conform to the new funding level.

NCD's FY 2009 initiatives capitalize upon our agency's ability to play a unique and valuable role in the federal policy process. With this requested increase, NCD will continue to strengthen the linkage between the Administration, Congress, and the growing but often overlooked constituency of people with disabilities.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **History**

Established in 1978 as an advisory board within the Department of Education (Public Law 95-602), NCD was transformed into an independent federal agency by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1984 (Public Law 98-221). NCD consists of 15 members appointed by the President of the United States and confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

### **Vision**

Disability touches everyone. In 2004, 51.2 million Americans reported some level of disability. All Americans have some experience with disability through their own daily experience or contact with relatives, colleagues or friends. At some point, most Americans will experience some form of functional incapacity or limitation as a normal part of aging.

Americans with disabilities represent a diverse group which includes individuals with physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities. Disabilities vary in terms of severity, longevity, cause and consequences. Some disabilities remain static throughout a person's life while others may have periods of remission or regression.

Through its outreach efforts, in various community venues, and at its quarterly meetings, NCD has continually learned about the impact of disability on individuals, families, and their communities. There are consistent messages being shared about NCD findings through comprehensive research reports, policy briefs, media outreach, our award-winning Internet website, and a monthly newsletter that receives worldwide attention.

Despite their diverse profile, Americans with disabilities share many common concerns. They face personal, social and economic disadvantages and barriers that prevent access to the same opportunities as Americans without disabilities. People with disabilities continue, for example, to have lower education levels and to be socially isolated and discriminated against in the workplace. They often face economic hardship in their daily lives and far too many live below the poverty line. Women and people with disabilities from diverse cultures, in particular, experience greater disadvantages, reporting higher incidences of unemployment and poverty.

Americans with disabilities share many common aspirations for themselves and for their country. They want a nation which demonstrates leadership with respect to disability issues. Persons with disabilities desire a country which is sensitive to individual needs

and ensures that Americans with disabilities have input into the policies, programs and decisions that affect them. They seek a country which makes it possible to achieve a decent standard of living and support an approach to disability issues that is common to all jurisdictions but sensitive to regional differences and needs. Persons with disabilities want a nation that uses legal and other measures to promote social and economic equity and equality of outcomes.

In light of these views, and in keeping with its Congressional mandate, NCD is currently working on a series of reports known as Investing in Independence, which interrelate with centerpiece initiatives presented in President Bush's New Freedom Initiative. These reports focus on access to quality health care services, improving postsecondary transitions and vocational rehabilitation, financial incentives related to employment and living independently, modernizing disability indicators and quality of life data, effective educational services and outcomes, and an annual disability progress report. In addition, NCD is working on a new Congressional mandate, articulated in the Post-Katrina Act, involving the coordination of key homeland security tasks with the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Throughout all of its work, and in conjunction with its federal partners, NCD aims to foster and support the production, dissemination and application of unique information and sound advice leading to policies that enhance the lives of people with disabilities.

### **Highlights of NCD FY 2009 Budget Submission**

The budget proposed for NCD in FY 2009 supports critical activities of importance to people with disabilities, while reflecting the commitment of NCD leadership to control costs and increase efficiency of agency operations wherever possible. As a small independent agency, it is necessary for NCD to contract with larger support agencies or contractors for functions accomplished by staff in larger agencies. Those support entities have levied frequent increases on NCD, and must often be paid with funds originally intended to support research and other NCD priorities. The result has been the cancellation or postponement of several important research projects during the past three years.

NCD recognizes that there are many challenges facing the nation that require the administration to take a frugal approach, and we at NCD are willing to shoulder our share of the load. However, a continuing series of annual reductions in the NCD appropriation have adversely affected the agency's ability to carry out its programs in support of the President and Congress' objectives that strive to enhance the independence and economic self-sufficiency for more than 51 million Americans with disabilities and their families. We believe there are several reasons why our mission should be supported at the requested level.



It is important to note that this NCD budget request includes a reduction in the number of staff, and rent that is \$60,000 less than the FY 2007 lease amount thanks to a reduction in the size of our office space. Additional savings are anticipated for printing, mailing and office equipment, and we continue to analyze internal processes to identify other potential improvements or savings.

There are increases in two line items that reflect the active involvement of NCD members in all aspects of agency operations, and their commitment to increased public outreach and input at quarterly meetings. These costs are reflected in increased member salaries and travel, and it is important that this level of involvement continues to be supported. The NCD investment in Program Contracts has been increased significantly in this budget, with \$200,000 added to support priority research projects and to help offset the increases in Council member travel, member and staff salaries, and meeting-related costs.

Two items listed in Program Contracts are one-time enhancements that represent top priorities for the Council. First, \$150,000 is requested to support a national conference on disability, which will expand on a similar event that NCD supported in 1996. Another \$300,000 is required to continue the homeland security work assigned to the Council in HR 5441. Because it has been challenging to get fully involved with the complex FEMA infrastructure during the initial months after the Congressional mandate was received, the Council has exercised discretion to assure that the initial funding received was available for significant activities when needed, which are now anticipated to begin in FY 2008.

As the FEMA/NCD relationship has become more active during FY 2007, NCD has used approximately \$48,000 of its original fiscal year funds to support NCD member and staff involvement in meetings related to emergency preparedness. With a smaller budget in FY 2008, that funding approach will no longer be possible and we plan to fully expend the new funds Congress dedicated for this purpose to support the following activities in FY 2008:

- NCD staff and member involvement in national security exercises, including *Top Off 4* in October, 2007,
- Support of public hearings and expert panels at NCD quarterly meetings and other appropriate national events that involve people with disabilities,
- Publication and/or dissemination of emergency preparedness materials developed specifically for people with disabilities,
- Completion of the nine activities outlined in HR 5441, and
- Support for NCD members and staff to attend and/or present at major homeland security conferences and trainings.

Detailed information about the requested enhancements is available in the Program Contracts section of this budget. NCD staff and council members have continued to be responsible stewards of taxpayer funds dedicated to improving policies and programs that support and protect people with disabilities. With only one exception, caused by inaccurate tracking or forecasting of expenditures in FY 2006, NCD has consistently completed each fiscal year at or near projected budget levels. FY 2007 expenditures will continue that trend.

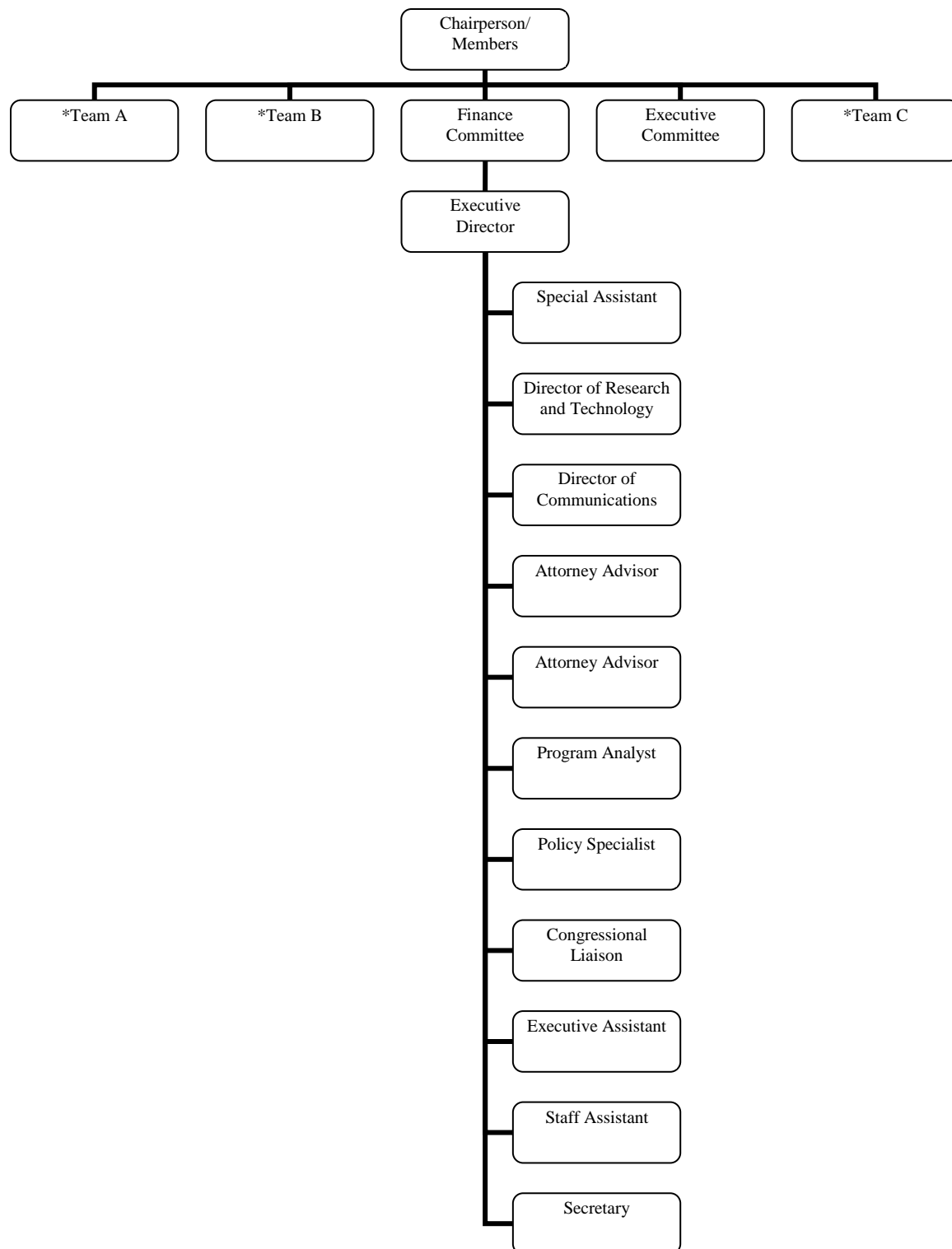
### **Authorization**

NCD was initially established in 1978 as an advisory board within the Department of Education (Public Law 95-602). The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1984 (Public Law 98-221) transformed NCD into an independent agency and required NCD to provide expert advice to Congress and the Administration. Changes were made to NCD's statutory mandate by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992 and 1998 and the Education of the Deaf Act Technical Amendments of 1993.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of NCD is to promote the full inclusion, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency of people with disabilities of all ages and backgrounds by providing advice, analysis, and recommendations on disability policy to the President, Congress, and other federal agencies.

## ORGANIZATION CHART



## **PROPOSED APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE**

### **National Council on Disability**

#### **Salaries and Expenses**

For expenses necessary for the National Council on Disability as authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, \_\_\_\_\_ (Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act; additional authorizing legislation required)

## **ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE PROVISIONS AND CHANGES**

There are no proposed changes in the appropriations language.

## **AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION**

The National Council on Disability (NCD) was initially established in 1978 as an advisory board within the Department of Education (Public Law 95-602). The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1984 (Public Law 98-221) transformed NCD into an independent agency and required NCD to provide expert advice to Congress and the Administration. Changes were made to NCD's statutory mandate by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992 and 1998 and the Education of the Deaf Act Technical Amendments of 1993.

## BUDGET AUTHORITY AND STAFFING BY ACTIVITY

### Salaries and Expenses

	<u>FY 2007</u>	<u>FY 2008(reqst)</u>	<u>FY 2009(reqst)</u>
Budget Authority	3,112,492	3,112,560	3,756,549
FTE	14	12	12
Positions (FTP)	13	12	12

**ANALYSIS OF CHANGE  
FY 2007 TO FY 2009**

	<b>FY 2007</b>	<b>FY 2008</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>	<b>CHANGE FROM</b>	<b>% CHANGE FROM</b>	<b>% CHANGE FROM</b>
	<b>Approved</b>	<b>REQUESTED</b>	<b>REQUESTED</b>	<b>FY 2008 TO FY 2009</b>	<b>FY 2008 TO FY 2009</b>	<b>FY 2007 TO FY 2009</b>
BUDGET AUTHORITY	\$ 3,125,492	\$ 3,112,560	\$ 3,756,945	\$ 644,385.00	17%	17%
AMT AVAIL FOR OBL	\$ 3,125,492	\$ 3,112,560	\$ 3,756,945	\$ 644,385.00	17%	17%
* FULL TIME PERMANENT	\$ 1,318,492	\$ 1,375,655	\$ 1,255,583	\$ (120,072.00)	-10%	-5%
* OTHER THAN FULL-TIME	\$ 100,000	\$ 122,700	\$ 200,000	\$ 77,300.00	39%	50%
OVERTIME/AWARDS	\$ 10,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 25,112	\$ 13,112.00	52%	60%
<b>TOTAL PERSONNEL COST</b>	<b>\$ 1,428,492</b>	<b>\$ 1,510,355</b>	<b>\$ 1,480,695</b>	<b>\$ (29,660.00)</b>	<b>-2%</b>	<b>4%</b>
* BENEFITS, CIVILIAN	\$ 297,000	\$ 330,705	\$ 376,675	\$ 45,970.00	12%	21%
TRAVEL	\$ 185,000	\$ 161,000	\$ 370,000	\$ 209,000.00	56%	50%
RENT	\$ 295,000	\$ 258,000	\$ 277,203	\$ 19,203.00	7%	-6%
COMMUNICATIONS	\$ 60,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ -	0%	-20%
PRINTING	\$ 50,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ -	0%	-67%
OTHER SERVICES	\$ 760,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 1,149,872	\$ 399,872.00	35%	34%
SUPPLIES, MATERIALS AND PUBLICATIONS	\$ 40,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ -	0%	-100%
EQUIPMENT	\$ 10,000	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ -	0%	-300%
TOTAL OBLIGATIONS	\$ 3,125,492	\$ 3,112,560	\$ 3,756,945	\$ 644,385.00	17%	17%
* = FIXED COST ITEMS						
<b>OTHER SERVICES</b>	<b>\$ 760,000</b>	<b>\$ 750,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,149,872</b>	<b>\$ 399,872.00</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>34%</b>
Program Contracts	\$ 500,000	\$ 450,000	\$ 849,872	\$ 399,872.00	47%	41%
Administrative Contracts	\$ 260,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	\$ -	0%	13%

**AVAILABLE FOR OBLIGATION**

	<u>FY 2008</u>	<u>FY 2009</u>	<u>Net Change</u>
	<u>Request</u>	<u>Request</u>	
Budget Authority	3,112,560	3,756,549	644,385
Outlays	3,112,560	3,756,549	644,385
FTE	12	12	0
Positions (FTP)	12	12	0

## APPROPRIATIONS HISTORY

Salaries and Expense Account  
(Amounts in thousands of dollars)

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Budget Authority</u>	<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Budget Authority</u>
1980	25	2005	3,344*****
1981	205	2006	3,144*'
1982	197	2007	3,125*''
1983	198	2008	3,112 (req)
1984	500	2009	3,756 (req)
1985	750		
1986	732		
1987	860		
1988	871*		
1989	1,160		
1990	1,540		
1991	1,439		
1992	1,569		
1993	1,541		
1994	1,690		
1995	1,793		
1996	1,793		
1997	1,791		
1998	1,793		
1999	2,344		
2000	2,391**		
2001	2,615		
2002	2,829***		
2003	2,839****		
2004	3,021*****		

FY 1988 amount reflects reductions pursuant to Public Law 100-436. \*

FY 2000 amount reflects reductions pursuant to Public Law 106-113. \*\*

FY 2002 amount reflects reductions pursuant to Public Law 107-206. \*\*\*

FY 2003 amount reflects reductions pursuant to Public Law 108-7. \*\*\*\*

FY 2004 amount reflects reductions pursuant to Public Law 108-199\*\*\*\*\*

FY 2005 amount reflects reductions pursuant to Public Law 108-447\*\*\*\*\*

FY 2006 amount reflects reductions pursuant to Public Law 109-148\*'

FY 2007 amount reflects reductions pursuant to Public Law 110-5



## **CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTIVES**

H.R.2206, the U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act of 2007, provided NCD with an additional amount for 'Salaries and Expenses' (\$300,000), to remain available until expended for necessary expenses related to the requirements of the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 as enacted by the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act of 2007 (Public Law 109-295). This legislation requires NCD to accomplish specific activities related to homeland security as part of HR 5441.

## **NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION**

The National Council on Disability's (NCD) Budget Request for FY 2009 is in the amount of **\$3,756,945**. A detailed breakdown and justification of this request follows:

### **OBJECT CLASS 11: PERSONNEL**

#### **A. FTEs**

For FY 2009, NCD requests 13.0 FTEs. This request includes eleven full-time employees (permanent) and the executive director, as well as one FTE to cover the salaries of NCD members. Please note that NCD has voluntarily reduced one FTE and will be refilling two vacant positions at lower salary grades in an effort to conserve resources.

At the present time, the chairperson and members of NCD are involved in a number of interagency working groups and advisory committees that require their participation and attendance at frequent meetings in Washington, D.C. These advisory groups and committees include: the Office of Disability Employment Policy; the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; the National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research; the Center for Disease Control and Prevention; and the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

In addition to standing committees and working groups, NCD members are requested to serve on many disability-related task forces established by other agencies and private entities as a result of the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act and NCD's congressionally mandated monitoring role regarding the implementation of this important legislation.

Seven policy positions comprise the majority of NCD staffing. Two positions, senior attorney advisors, are responsible for research and analysis of regulations, case law, precedent and other legal documentation relating to disability civil rights laws, monitoring and advising on the legal implications of proposed statutory and regulatory changes, drafting legislation, interpreting the Board's statute, and advising on the legal implications of proposed policies and procedures. Two other positions are a policy analyst and a director of research and technology who conduct ongoing inquiries into the most pressing problems facing people with disabilities, produce policy reports and draft recommendations, track important legislative and policy issues, maintain and expand interagency relations regarding the development and evaluation of well-coordinated disability policy, and provide programmatic information and referral services. The fifth position is a congressional liaison to help guide and support NCD's advisory work both with various Congressional committees, subcommittees, and caucuses, as well as Executive Branch departments and agencies.

The sixth position is a director of communications responsible for monitoring all media coverage of issues impacting people with disabilities, developing and producing informational materials for the public, developing an agency communications plan, arranging interviews between the media and NCD members, and handling publicity regarding NCD events (such as quarterly meetings and hearings) to promote a high degree of public participation in NCD activities. The seventh position is the executive director, who coordinates the activities of all staff, participates in key meetings with federal partners and disability stakeholders at the national level, and approves work products of the Council.

The operational or support staff members include a special assistant who coordinates all administrative processes, an executive assistant, staff assistant, and an office automation clerk. The responsibilities of the special assistant, executive assistant, staff assistant and secretary include processing member and staff travel expense claims, making travel and hotel reservations for meetings, recording and forwarding financial documents after management approval, typing and filing, editing reports, answering telephones and directing callers to the appropriate staff, as well as record-keeping and administrative support across all areas of NCD.

During FY 2007, NCD began contracting with GSA for the fiscal services previously under the direction of an NCD financial officer. While this contractual arrangement has increased administrative contract costs, it provides an excellent opportunity to obtain continuous control agency input on the financial transactions of NCD.

## **B. FULL-TIME POSITIONS**

For FY 2009, NCD requests a budget of **\$1,255,583** for salary expenses associated with full-time employees. This amount represents the projected cost for a total of 12 full-

time positions including annual civil service salary increases, step increases and promotions.

### **C. OTHER THAN FULL-TIME POSITIONS**

For FY 2009, **\$200,000** and one FTE is budgeted for compensation of NCD council members. NCD members are paid at an Executive Level IV rate as required by statute. This budgeted amount reflects the prior level of expenditures during FY 2007 and is an indicator of members being actively involved and familiar with the activities and affairs of NCD.

### **D. SALARY OVERTIME/AWARDS**

A total of **\$25,112** is budgeted for overtime and awards for staff.

### **E. OTHER PERSONNEL COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

A total of **\$376,675** is budgeted for other personnel compensation and benefits during FY 2009. Personnel benefits are a direct function of the amount of budgeted salary/wages and inclusive of transit subsidy.

## **OBJECT CLASS 21: TRAVEL**

### **A. NCD MEMBERS**

The 15 NCD members receive, by law, reimbursement of travel expenses associated with the four meetings required annually and with other meetings that NCD may schedule. NCD members are also reimbursed for travel to meetings, consumer forums, professional conferences, and other official functions where they represent NCD. Because most NCD members are people with disabilities, it is important to note that additional travel costs may be required for personal assistants. The amount of **\$170,000** is budgeted for travel by NCD members in FY 2009.

### **B. STAFF**

Staff travel is budgeted at **twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000)** for FY 2009. Some staff members travel to NCD meetings, the majority of which are scheduled to be held outside of the District of Columbia. Additionally, staff members will also participate in various professional meetings and conferences, and make site visits to programs serving people with disabilities, which are supported with federal funds. As was previously mentioned under NCD members' travel, staff members also include people with disabilities who may incur additional travel costs for personal assistants.

### **C. COUNCIL ADVISORS/ASSISTANTS**

NCD is committed to involving leaders in disability policy and research from across the nation as advisors to participate with NCD in many roles. NCD plans to involve a select number of advisors in its scheduled meetings and consumer forums and hearings during FY 2009. NCD will reimburse participants at these meetings for travel and per diem only. No funds will be used to pay salaries for advisors in these meetings. **Twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000)** is budgeted for travel of NCD advisors/assistants in FY 2009.

### **OBJECT CLASS 23: RENTAL PAYMENTS TO GSA**

NCD currently occupies office space at 1331 F Street, NW, in Washington, D.C. Leasing arrangements are coordinated for NCD through the General Services Administration. During FY 2009 NCD expects to be responsible for **\$277,203** in rental payments through its lease, inclusive of any unexpected increases due to tax adjustments.

Please note that NCD voluntarily relinquished a portion of its office space in the Fall of 2007 in an attempt to counter rapidly escalating rent increases that were beyond agency control.

### **OBJECT CLASS 23: COMMUNICATIONS, UTILITIES, AND MISCELLANEOUS CHARGES**

#### **A. TELEPHONES**

NCD's budget includes an estimated **\$20,000** for telephone service and maintenance during FY 2009. This estimate is based on historical data as well as costs associated with NCD's need to maintain responsibility for its total telephone expenditures. This amount also includes the cost of conference calls for Council committees, a much more cost-effective method for conducting interim business than bringing various committee members together for face-to-face meetings.

NCD's operations require the use of telephones and text telephones for both local and long distance calling to maintain communications with NCD members, advisors, other agencies, private organizations, and members of the public. The staff and members provide outreach, information, and referral services.

#### **B. POSTAGE AND DELIVERY**

NCD maintains regular communications with people with disabilities, agencies, organizations, and with private provider organizations serving people with disabilities.

Frequent mailings are also made to NCD members, advisors, and people interested in disability issues nationwide. NCD distributes its monthly newsletter to approximately 2,100+ individuals and organizations nationwide. Postage is also needed for the dissemination of NCD's reports. In addition, NCD business practices require the use of local delivery and messenger services to ensure prompt and safe delivery of documents to other agencies located in Washington, D.C. **NCD is requesting \$30,000** has budgeted for this purpose in FY 2009.

## **OBJECT CLASS 24: PRINTING AND REPRODUCTION**

NCD has budgeted **\$60,000** in FY 2009 for printing costs. These costs will include: a) printing a monthly bulletin that is sent to more than 9,000 people with disabilities, professionals, and organizations interested in disability issues nationwide; b) printing a statutorily mandated special report on the status of disability policy to the President and Congress; and c) other public information materials and monographs as required. Several of NCD's research activities will generate reports that will require publishing. In addition, it is NCD policy to produce, upon request, materials in braille, large print, compact disc, diskette and on cassette tape to accommodate members of the public who are visually impaired or hearing impaired. Some NCD documents are printed in languages other than English in order to ensure the information is reaching the diverse populations of this country. NCD will also be investigating the cost-effectiveness of increasing the use of emerging technologies for dissemination of information (especially NCD reports) to people with disabilities throughout the world.

## **OBJECT CLASS 25: OTHER SERVICES**

### **A. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICE CONTRACTS**

As a small independent agency, NCD must contract with multiple agencies or private vendors for many of the services performed in-house by staff at larger agencies. These contracts cover items such interpreting services, real-time captioning, printing, personal assistance services, information technology, web hosting, news services, mailing house and auditing.

### **GSA SERVICES CONTRACT**

NCD is authorized by statute to contract with the General Services Administration (GSA) for technical and administrative assistance. **Fifty-five thousand dollars (\$55,000)** is budgeted for these services for FY 2009. The contract provides required assistance in payroll, legal services, human resources, and accounting.

### **B. RESEARCH AND CONTRACTUAL SERVICES**

NCD has budgeted **\$1,000,000** for program contracts, of which **\$550,000** is to be used on programmatic research projects during FY 2009. The Council is also requesting **\$150,000** to support a national conference on disability, and **\$300,000** to continue supporting NCD activities related to homeland security and emergency preparedness for people with disabilities. Both of those items will be supported by one-time funding. All proposed contracts in this category are described below.

NCD's priorities are based upon recommendations developed by NCD Board members and stakeholders and are based upon the goals and objectives outlined in NCD's strategic planning process. Research studies and projects are commissioned by NCD when it is necessary to enlist the support of outside individuals and groups who possess expertise not available within NCD itself. Given the limited size of our agency, the judicious use of external research studies and projects substantially enhances our capability to meet our basic mandate "to provide expert advice" to the Administration and Congress on disability policy issues.

In proposing the *New Freedom Initiative* (NFI), President George W. Bush and his Administration gave their immediate and firm commitment to moving forward with initiatives aimed at achieving independence and full integration of Americans with disabilities. FY 2009 NCD studies interrelate with centerpiece initiatives presented in President Bush's NFI and the findings and recommendations of these research studies will help guide Congress and the Bush Administration's implementation of the NFI.

NCD has a number of projects proposed for completion in FY 2009 that reflect the interests and concerns that thousands of people with disabilities have brought to the agency's attention. NCD's FY 2009 initiatives relate to its *Investing in Independence* series of reports, capitalizing upon NCD's ability to play a unique and valuable role in the federal policy process. With the requested budget, NCD will carry out the following proposed projects:

## **Program Contracts**

### **Proposed Project(s) for FY 2009 NCD Budget**

#### **1) National Conference on Disability**

The purpose of a national conference is to take stock nationally of "disability" related achievements in the areas of legislation, best practices, poverty alleviation, civic participation, and asset building, to name a few; examining the effect democracy has had on people with disability, with particular focus on progress since the NCD 1996 leadership summit. The national conference is designed to highlight legislative, educational, employment, housing, technological, economic, political, and social policies

and programs designed to enhance the quality of life of all Americans with disabilities. A facilitation methodology will be used in all large and small group activities, whenever appropriate, in which to engage conference attendees in identifying best practices and achievements and in determining the way forward.

In addition, and throughout the conference, people with and without disabilities will be invited to: (a) seek out and inquire into that which is best practice; (b) present, provide information and share stories about that which is best practice; (c) to explore hopes and a common vision for the future; and (d) explore strategies for transforming America's current approach to building and maintaining livable communities for Americans with disabilities. NCD expects that this conference framework will release a positive energy and innovative insight that is greatly superior to the kind of energy and insight achieved through the negation, criticism, and "blame placing" often associated with problem- and deficit-based approaches to change which often typify national conferences or summits.

As an independent agency, NCD is uniquely positioned to bring the various disability-related government agencies, non-profit stakeholders and professional entities together to address this important topic, and it is our Council's unanimous recommendation that NCD needs to convene a national summit during the 20th year since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

This conference is the Council's top priority, and it will be accomplished in a manner that should be expected from what many consider to be the country's top disability agency. The one-time **\$150,000** investment by NCD will be leveraged to solicit support and partnerships from many federal agencies and the national organizations involved in disability-related services or policy.

## **2) Annual Progress Report to Congress**

In compliance with its authorizing statute, NCD will prepare and submit to the President and the appropriate committees of the Congress a report entitled *National Disability Policy: A Progress Report*. The report will assess the status of the Nation, with particular focus on new and emerging issues impacting the lives of people with disabilities. The report will also present, as appropriate, available data on health, housing, employment, insurance, transportation, recreation, training, prevention, early intervention, and education. Finally, the report will include recommendations for policy change. In determining the issues to focus on and the findings, conclusions, and recommendations to include in the report, the National Council will seek input from the public, particularly people with disabilities and their families, representatives of organizations representing a broad range of individuals with disabilities, and organizations and agencies interested in disability issues. **\$50,000** will be utilized for this report.

## **3) Homeland Security**

## **NCD's FY 2009 Homeland Security Work**

As a result of NCD's expertise and concern about the lack of disability involvement in planning or response systems related to emergency preparedness and homeland security, in FY 2007 Congress appropriated \$300,000 to NCD for accomplishing specific activities that will enhance the ability of the emergency preparedness and response network to meet the needs of people with disabilities in future disasters. That initial funding will be expended in FY 2008, and NCD requires continuing support of the same amount to allow the Council to continue meeting this ongoing Congressional mandate. Congress initially assigned NCD to carry out nine specific responsibilities to be accomplished with the cooperation of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). During FY 2009, NCD will continue its implementation of congressionally mandated responsibilities under Public Law 109-295. These responsibilities involve the Administrator of FEMA working with NCD and others (e.g., a national advisory council) on at least nine (9) major tasks, including:

1. Appointing a Disability Coordinator;
2. Interacting regarding the needs of individuals with disabilities in emergency planning requirements and relief efforts in the event of a natural disaster, act of terrorism, or other man-made disaster;
3. Completing, revising, and updating, as necessary, guidelines to define risk-based target capabilities for federal, state, local, and tribal government preparedness that will enable the nation to prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against all hazards, including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and others;
4. Carrying out a national training program to implement the national preparedness goal, National Incident Management System, National Response Plan, and other related plans and strategies;
5. Carrying out a national exercise program to test and evaluate the national preparedness goal, National Incident Management System, National Response Plan, and other related plans and strategies;
6. Establishing a comprehensive system to assess, on an ongoing basis, the Nation's prevention capabilities and overall preparedness, including operational readiness;
7. Establishing a remedial action management program to: (1) analyze training, exercises, and real-world events to identify and disseminate lessons learned and best practices; (2) generate and disseminate, as appropriate, after action reports to participants in exercises and real-world events; and (3) conduct remedial action tracking and long-term trend analysis;



8. Developing, coordinating, and maintaining a National Disaster Housing Strategy; and
9. Developing guidelines to accommodate individuals with disabilities, which shall include guidelines for: (1) the accessibility of communications and programs in, shelters, recovery centers, and other facilities; and (2) the accessibility of devices used in connection with disaster operations, including first aid stations, mass feeding areas, portable payphone stations, portable toilets, and temporary housing.

During the past nine months of FY 2007, during which time we have been fulfilling our HR 5441 duties, we have learned some key lessons. First, these tasks require the full-time attention of a professional staff member who is familiar with the complexities of FEMA and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) operations across the various levels of government. Second, NCD needs to continue to be proactive in pursuit of its Congressional responsibilities. This is especially true in light of the continuous obstacles FEMA has presented to NCD (e.g., 11<sup>th</sup> hour work requests presented by FEMA to NCD, lack of information sharing by FEMA with NCD for work planning and resource allocation).

As part of our proactive stance to fulfilling our HR 5441 duties, we will undertake a number of activities.

- NCD will gather and share information and best practices about emergency preparation, disaster management, disaster recovery and disaster relief particularly, but not exclusively, incidents that are deemed national emergencies. NCD will routinely contact local disability organizations and emergency personnel to ask how specific disaster and emergency responses impacted people with disabilities and what were the lessons. NCD will also identify via media or other methods, people with disabilities in disasters and contact them for input. As part of this effort, NCD will request and work with the network of federally funded ADA & Information Technology Centers in an effort to gather and supply information about state policies regarding ADA compliance and promising practices in serving people with disabilities during and after disasters;
- NCD will hold field hearings at the NCD 2008 Board Meeting in New Orleans on key issues, framed generally by NCD's work and Post-Katrina Act responsibilities, and will invite representatives from nearby states;
- NCD will devote time in Boston, New Orleans (discussed above) and Philadelphia to gain targeted information from local and regional disability and

emergency communities regarding serving people with disabilities in disasters;

- NCD will incorporate homeland security issues (i.e., Post-Katrina Act task defined issues) as a “strand” within all applicable NCD research and reports including the NCD Annual Progress Report. Examples include reports scheduled to be completed in 2008 regarding infrastructure and housing;
- NCD will work with the American Red Cross and other National Volunteer Organizations Assisting in Disasters (NVOAD) members to establish/confirm ADA and Section 504 policies and practices. Similar responses will be solicited from the other 29 NVOAD organizations. NCD will then compile results and disseminate to the entire coalition of response organizations, soliciting improvement as they prepare for future disasters; and
- NCD will continue its interaction with national disability organizations (e.g., Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Homeland Security Task Force) encouraging these organizations to gather information from constituents and sharing progress.

To ensure that NCD is able to complete the required HR 5441 responsibilities and the above-listed ‘proactive’ activities, NCD will need to hire/contract for a full-time professional with the necessary technical expertise.

#### *Homeland Security--Rapid Response Research Program*

The Rapid Response Research Program (RRRP) is another proposed element of NCD’s portfolio of homeland security work. It is designed to allow a designated NCD staff member to go quickly to a disaster site to gather data that would otherwise be lost. Rapid Response activities will only be engaged in to study disasters as they are occurring and in their immediate post-impact period (days to weeks after an event). This effort will enable NCD to get into the field as soon as possible to conduct short, qualitative, and/or quantitative field investigations of disasters, most particularly as disasters affect people with disabilities and/or people with special needs.

When a disaster or emergency event occurs that presents an appropriate opportunity, NCD’s designated staff member will contact the Executive Director and the Board’s Homeland Security Committee for authorization to enter the field. As part of the contact and request for authorization, the staff member will submit a proposal that identifies the scope of the field research to be pursued, an outline of the research methodology, and detail how they plan to enter the field during or shortly after an event. If the proposal is

approved, funds will be authorized and obligated to cover travel, per diem, and modest data collection costs.

The RRRP is intended to get the designated NCD staff member into the field as quickly as possible. Depending on the approved research proposal, this might require the staffer to arrive at the disaster site within 24 hours of impact, while in other cases entry to the field may not be necessary for a few days. The length of time a staff member will stay in the field may vary based on several factors such as time, money, and access to the data required.

Any NCD staff member who is authorized to travel under the RRRP will be required to submit a report of research findings. Each RRRP report will describe the research question, methods, and findings, and the theoretical and/or applied significance (lessons learned) of those findings.

NCD expects that the findings from the RRRP will reveal insights that enable us to share information with: policy makers on mitigation issues; with federal, state, local emergency management personnel on how response and recovery could occur more efficiently, equitably, and effectively in the post-disaster time period and with people with disabilities and their families. The sum of **\$300,000** is requested for the above purposes.

#### **4) Healthcare - Access to Finances for Health Care**

People with disabilities face serious challenges because of their often substantial health care needs, their reliance on a wide range of services and supports, and their often low and fixed incomes. Despite these challenges and the need to navigate a complex system of public and private sources of health care coverage and assistance, little is known about the services and supports people with disabilities need to live independently in the community, the extent to which their needs are being met by the health care system, and how this varies by source of insurance and other personal characteristics.

This study will examine the role of health insurance for people with disabilities, with a particular emphasis on Medicare and Medicaid. Together, these two programs provide coverage to more than 10 million non-elderly people (under age 65) living with disabilities. Given the size of the population affected, the substantial commitment in public dollars, and the challenges inherent in living with a disability, it is important to understand how well these programs are meeting people's needs and the extent to which gaps in coverage create barriers to needed care.

This project will highlight key issues, including the diversity of the population, the major health care challenges they face, how their experiences vary by insurance type, and the extent to which specific sources of coverage are associated with access- and cost-

related problems. The project report will include a range of policy options that could be considered in an effort to address the challenges identified. A sum of **\$200,000** will be needed to commission this research.

## **5) Transition From School to Adulthood**

This research report will expand upon the FY 2007 NCD study of transition within the vocational rehabilitation system to explore the other factors which influence the successful transition of youth with disabilities from school to work or higher education.

The conditions and realities of youth with disabilities are changing. Adolescents are entering adulthood via more complex pathways as a result of socio-economic and demographic pressures. Traditional progressions from school, to work, or to independent living and family formation rarely apply. It is now common for youth to pursue work and school at the same time, go back and forth between training and work, change training paths, or leave and return to the parental home and independent life.

The transition to adulthood can be a particularly risky and unpredictable period, especially for those who face competitive disadvantages at school or in the workplace, who do not have access to resources to support prolonged transitions, or who face a series of environmental problems in the family, school and community. As a result, new perspectives and tools are needed for framing transition issues for public policy, including an emphasis on effective best-practice approaches to better reflect the interrelated aspects of the lives of young people with disabilities.

The project will examine the changing realities, issues and challenges of today's youth with disabilities, including implications for public policy. It will help develop a knowledge-base and policy/program framework for supporting effective funding, analysis, measurement, and responses to transition issues in America. A sum of **\$150,000** will be allotted to this project.

## **6) Comprehensive Review of Mental Health Systems**

The World Health Organization predicts that, by 2020, depression will be the world's leading cause of disability. In the United States today, estimates are that one in five people has some type of mental health problem. In addition to the personal hardship caused by poor mental health, the economic costs to the individual and our nation's formal care systems can be high.

Because of both the increasing importance of mental health services and supports, as well as the growing number of people who rely on those services and supports, the NCD has decided to conduct a comprehensive review of mental health services in the nation. We will review the quality of mental health services and supports being provided:

in local communities; in VA hospitals and community outreach centers; and, in specialist hospitals and clinics. People with poor mental health often face discrimination and social isolation. They also experience physical ill health because of their condition, which may partly be due to poor diet, smoking, inadequate housing, self-neglect and the side effects of the medicines they may be taking.

While not always acknowledged as such, mental health services are a very important part of modern healthcare. The mental health care that is provided in the community is supposed to be different from traditional care because it treats people outside the hospital setting, around their own schedule, and with their personal needs in mind.

The effectiveness of the various community-based programs will be evaluated in this report. We will ask people who use these services and supports what they think is important to ensure that they receive the highest quality of service and care. We will also look at whether the services and/or supports that are being provided are actually helping people to recover and to become part of their local community again. Finally, we will look at the impact of various configurations of mental health services and supports on the neighborhoods and communities within which they are located. NCD requires **\$150,000** to support this research report.

### **C. READERS, INTERPRETERS, PERSONAL ASSISTANTS, AND MEETING SUPPORT**

In addition to using expert contractors to develop specific data and background information, NCD, in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act, provides interpreters for people who are deaf and hard of hearing, readers for people with visual impairments, and personal care assistants for members and staff with significant disabilities. The temporary employment, by contract, of such providers is directly related to the nature of the work performed by NCD and to the explicitly stated policy of affirmative action and outreach to which NCD subscribes.

Accessible space and public address systems for meetings held outside of NCD are secured on a contractual basis. The estimated cost for meeting space rental, readers, interpreters, (CART), personal assistants, and other meeting support costs such as taping services and assistive communication services is **\$150,000** for FY 2009.

### **D. TRAINING**

In order for NCD staff to stay current with critical issues facing people with disabilities and to improve their technical skills, participation in training programs is necessary. After training needs are identified in individual staff development plans, training is provided in appropriate content areas such as contract management, computer

technology, financial management, supervision, management, and other areas. The sum of **\$15,000** has been budgeted for that purpose in FY 2009.

## **OBJECT CLASS 26: SUPPLIES, MATERIALS AND PUBLICATIONS**

NCD's budget includes **\$20,000** for the purchase of supplies, materials and publications for FY 2009. The amount includes supplies for mailing, copying, and ordinary office supplies such as paper, pens, and pencils. Also budgeted are funds for the purchase of computer software, library materials, and for subscriptions to relevant scientific, technical, and policy-oriented publications. NCD subscribes to various electronic information services in order to provide members and staff current technical information. The cost for these services is included in this category.

## **OBJECT CLASS 31: EQUIPMENT**

As the only independent agency in the federal government with sole responsibility to provide expert advice on disability policy, it is essential that NCD serve as a model for others by ensuring that all of our work is accessible to people with any type disability. In order to ensure full access for Council members and staff with disabilities, we are requesting **\$2,500** under this category in FY 2009 to replace or purchase any equipment used for accommodations needed by staff or members.

## **Gauging the Effectiveness of NCD**

NCD's reports and recommendations have informed all branches of the U.S. government, international groups, the research community and the public about the various dimensions of complex disability issues and their importance in public policy development.. Our agency has an impressive record of doing more with less, and the following section speaks to our effectiveness in completing the activities outlined in our authorizing legislation.

Additionally, the public interest in Council outreach and educational activities can be measured by the number of unique online visits to our Internet web pages, requests for NCD documents, and by the numbers of subsequent articles published by the media following release of an NCD report or news release. Gauging the impact of NCD policy development and research reports is best measured by determining what actions other entities have taken with those products.

Listing the total number of NCD research reports and policy briefs requires a 12-page document, so these comments will be restricted to work completed in the last five years. During the period 2002 through 2007, NCD staff and contracted researchers completed 24 major reports and a like number of policy briefs on issues of importance to people with disabilities. Those 24 reports contained over 800 recommendations directed to

other federal agencies, Congress, and non-governmental organizations that provide disability services. An in-depth discussion of how [NCD's policy research, reports, and recommendations were used illustrates their value and is our best estimate of the quality of our products.]

## **Policy and Research Impact**

Translating the impact of, or the response to, NCD's work into a measure of NCD's impact on public policy is not an easy task, for many reasons:

- First, the impact will have both a short-term and a long-term effect, and only the former can be addressed in this budget document.
- Second, given the brief time period of focus here (i.e., 2002-2007) NCD's earlier reports have a greater likelihood of being considered in policy discussions and policy/program actions than those released later in this time period because interested parties would have had a greater amount of time to respond to the earlier reports.
- Third, the issues addressed by NCD differed in their immediate importance to policymakers. For example, emergency preparedness research was of immediate concern to policymakers — because of the scope and consequences of recent natural disasters — and thus received the greatest attention, whereas policy research on the civil rights of institutionalized persons received far less attention.
- Fourth, when a government agency or other organization develops policy that makes use of or refers to NCD's work, it does not necessarily mean that NCD should be credited with having had a direct influence on the decision to develop or adopt the policy. Many factors influence the development of policy, and NCD's reports may be mentioned because they truly were influential, or they may be mentioned for purely political reasons.
- Finally, a good portion of NCD's contribution to the policymaking process has been to inform public discussion and debate over some highly contentious and value-laden issues, a contribution that is not easily measured.

Acceptance of, reliance on, or reference to NCD's factual findings, analyses, as well as its recommendations is not, therefore, a full measure of our agency's contribution to public policy. It is important that any assessment of NCD's contribution to public policy be conducted with these limitations in mind.

The impact of NCD's policy research is measured in a number of ways. NCD's work has frequently been referenced by: the White House, Congress, federal agencies, professional societies, the private sector, and others that have issued statements, guidance, and other documents that referenced, discussed, or were based on NCD's policy research and initiatives. In addition, legislation has been introduced at both the federal and state levels

that cited NCD's research or was based on NCD's policy work. The following impact was identified by NCD:

- Impact on the White House and other members of the administration to NCD's policy research and its reports
- Federal legislation introduced or enacted that was a result (direct or indirect) of NCD's policy research and its reports
- Testimony before Congress by NCD Board Members, staff, or others at Congress's invitation
- Utilization of NCD's policy research and reports, including guidelines, statements, policies, and procedures, by relevant federal agencies, congressional committees, etc.
- Statements and related documents from national organizations, professional societies, private industry, and other entities that followed from or were made in response to NCD's policy research and reports.

Other countries and international organizations have also developed policies or issued statements on topics on which NCD has reported. Many of these policies and statements cite NCD's work. NCD Board Members and staff were also consulted by international organizations such as the United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID). The following impact of NCD's policy research and reports on other countries and international organizations was identified:

- Legislation that was introduced or enacted abroad that was a result (direct or indirect) of NCD's policy research and reports.
- Policies, statements, and other documents from international organizations that refer to or are based on any of NCD's policy research and reports.

NCD's work has been discussed in leading national newspapers and magazines, and on television and radio. In addition, various scholars have written about NCD and its policy research and reports. NCD's primary function, as established in our authorizing legislation, is to provide advice to the federal government on matters pertaining to disability. NCD's policy research and reports from the period 2002 to 2007 have been accepted, relied on, and/or referenced by the White House, Congress, federal agencies and federal entities. In addition, NCD Board Members and staff have been invited to testify on key disability issues before the House and the Senate. White House documents, federal legislative proposals, congressional testimony, congressional committee reports, policy statements, and other relevant documents are offered as evidence of NCD impact:

White House/Executive Office of the President:



- OMB's PART of the Department of Health and Human Services/Office of Civil Rights for the year 2005 [Please note: This was in direct relation to NCD's report *Rehabilitating Section 504*, 2003]
- *The President's New Freedom Initiative: The 2007 Progress Report*, July 24, 2007

#### Federal Agencies:

- United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Ten-year Check-Up: Have Federal Agencies Responded to Civil Rights Recommendations?*, May 27, 2004, pages 116-117
- Remarks by DHS/CRCL official (Dan Sutherland) at NCD Report Release, available at the following internet address  
[http://www.dhs.gov/xabout/structure/editorial\\_0624.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xabout/structure/editorial_0624.shtm)
- Remarks by Department of Commerce official (Benjamin Wu) at NCD Report Release, available at the following internet address  
[http://www.technology.gov/speeches/BHW\\_041028.htm](http://www.technology.gov/speeches/BHW_041028.htm)
- Remarks of NCD staff to the Social Security Advisory Board based on NCD's Report on Long-Term Services and Supports, available at  
[http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/testimony/2006/gould\\_01-31-06.htm](http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/testimony/2006/gould_01-31-06.htm)
- Remarks of NCD staff to the Social Security Advisory Board based on NCD's Report on Employment and Social Security, available at  
[http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/testimony/2006/durocher\\_01-31-06.htm](http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/testimony/2006/durocher_01-31-06.htm)
- Remarks of NCD Board Member Anne Rader based on NCD's reports on homeland security, at a Federal Sector Conference on Homeland Security, available at the following address [http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/testimony/2006/rader\\_12-13-06.htm](http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/testimony/2006/rader_12-13-06.htm)

#### Congress:

- 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session; H.R. 3063, Children's Mental Health Screening and Prevention Act of 2003
- 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session; House Report 108-243; Committee on Appropriations urges FAA, NCD, TSA and RSPA to review and revise new technologies and procedures that will improve the ability of people needing supplemental oxygen to use during air travel.
- 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session; Senate Report 108-185; Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions references Individuals with Disabilities Education Act hearing testimony by NCD Board Member Lillian Rangel-Diaz. Senate report also cites NCD policy research findings under report discussion of "state eligibility" for federal grants.

- *Congressional Record*, May 13, 2004; IDEA Improvement Act of 2003; pages S5394 to S5410
- 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session; Senate Report 109-48; Committee on Finance references hearing testimony by NCD Board Member Carol Novak regarding a review of legislative proposals to improve access to Medicaid Home and Community Based Services such as President Bush's New Freedom Initiative and the Medicaid Community Based Attendant Services and Supports Act.
- 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session; House Report 109-515; Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act Bill, 2007 regarding an increased appropriation to conduct research work in relation to the Americans with Disabilities Act implementation [Please note: NCD issued a report, in keeping with this additional appropriation, in July 2007]
- Public Law 109-295; Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2007 regarding nine (9) specific Congressional requirements for NCD to fulfill regarding homeland security operations as related to FEMA operations and Americans with disabilities.
- 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session; House Report 110-168; Senate Amendment to the H.R. 2206 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Bill providing an additional amount for NCD for necessary expenses related to the requirements of P.L. 109-295--cited above.
- 110<sup>th</sup> Congress 1<sup>st</sup> Session; April 17, 2007 request by Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Leaders to GAO to update a GAO 2006 report on the American Red Cross and other National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters using NCD's policy research and findings as a benchmark for GAO's follow-up evaluation. [Please note: NCD was interviewed by GAO in summer of 2007 for this follow-up evaluation.]
- 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session; June 13, 2007 invited testimony provided by NCD Board Member Graham Hill to the House Homeland Security Committee's Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, preparedness and Response. Hearing entitled, "Citizen Preparedness: Helping Our Communities Help Themselves."

Government Accountability Office:

- GAO-04-879, *Special Education: Improved Timeliness and Better Use of Enforcement Actions Could Strengthen Education's Monitoring System*, September 9, 2004
- GAO-04-463, *Fair Housing: Opportunities to Improve HUD's Oversight and Management of the Enforcement Process*, April 21, 2004
- GAO-05-82, *American Community Survey: Key Unresolved Issues*, October 2004
- GAO-05-626, *Federal Disability Assistance: Wide Array of Programs Needs to be Examined in Light of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenges*, June 2, 2005

- GAO-07-44, *Transportation Disadvantaged Populations: Actions Needed to Clarify Responsibilities and Increase Preparedness for Evacuations*, December 22, 2006
- GAO-07-236, *Federal Disability Assistance: Stronger Federal Oversight Could Help Assure Multiple Programs' Accountability*, January 26, 2007
- GAO-07-411, *Emergency Preparedness: Current Emergency Alert System Has Limitations, and Development of a New Integrated System Will Be Challenging*, March 30, 2007
- GAO-07-934SP, *Highlights of a Forum: Modernizing Federal Disability Policy*, August 3, 2007

Congressional Research Service:

- CRS-RL33304, *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): The Definition of Disability*, March 9, 2006
- CRS-RS22254, *The Americans with Disabilities Act and Emergency Preparedness and Response*, July 21, 2006
- CRS-RL30006, *Genetic Information: Legal Issues Relating to Discrimination and Privacy*, June 5, 2003
- CRS-RL33729, *Federal Emergency Management Policy Changes After Hurricane Katrina: A Summary of Statutory Changes*, November 15, 2006
- CRS-RL34041, *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: Prohibiting Discrimination Against Individuals with Disabilities in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Assistance*, June 13, 2007

## **Impact on Organizations and the Community-at-Large**

Many organizations and segments of society have looked to NCD's work to inform their discussions and policy decisions, and have issued documents and policy statements that reference, discuss, or are based on NCD's policy research and reports. These constituents have also responded to NCD's requests for public comment on draft reports, posting their remarks on their Web sites for their members and others to consider.

In addition to documents and policy statements that mention NCD, organizations maintain links to NCD's specific policy research and reports on their Web sites. The interface between NCD and non-governmental organizations representing disability-specific professional groups, private industry, and advocacy groups is readily discerned through a quick web search.

## **International Impact**

Due to the transnational nature of human and civil rights issues, a need exists for international cooperation regarding the conduct of policy research and policy development. NCD recognized the increasingly global nature of human rights and civil rights and the importance of international cooperation, and took this factor into consideration when it prepared its reports and recommendations during the 2002 to 2007 time period. NCD examined documents, policy statements, regulations, and legislation from other countries and international organizations to inform their deliberations on one of the major issues confronting the global community — i.e., the prospect of a U.N. Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. Likewise, other countries and international organizations have looked to NCD's work to inform their discussions and policy decisions in this matter. Some evidence of NCD's role and impact in the international arena in this matter is provided below.

In FY 2002 NCD undertook two major initiatives to promote the dual goals of disability inclusion in foreign assistance programs and building national/international awareness of the human rights of people with disabilities. In the first initiative, NCD brought together staff involved in program development, field operations and human resources from the USAID, the State Department, and the Peace Corps, as well as NCD's International Watch Advisory Committee members, and other NGO community experts in disability policy and foreign development programs for a round table dialogue series. The purpose of the series was to hold meaningful and informative discussions on the economic, legal, social and human rights aspects of disability inclusion in development programs. A key outcome was to identify ways in which experts from the International Watch and NGO communities can be tapped by USAID, the State Department, the Peace Corps and others in their efforts to operationalize the disability policies of their organizations.

The second NCD initiative began with the commissioning of a white paper exploring the conceptual link between civil rights and human rights and why a human rights perspective is critical to the stability of civil rights in society. The white paper was used as an education and discussion tool for disability and international human rights groups on the current movement for an international convention on the human rights of people with disabilities. NCD also commissioned the development of an outreach tool or roadmap to serve as a guide to organizations interested in promoting awareness and action toward the adoption of an international disability convention. The development of both the white paper and outreach tool involved consultation with groups that have worked for the adoption of earlier international human rights conventions (on women, children, indigenous people, etc.). Following that work, NCD brought together disability and international human rights groups at a Summit meeting to educate and promote awareness of how the disability and human rights movements intersect and can collaborate to achieve greater dignity and integration of people with disabilities worldwide. The final step of the second initiative was to support selected information

dissemination strategies, (i.e., presentations on the international convention movement at annual organizational meetings, etc.) as resources permitted.

At a Congressional Human Rights Caucus meeting on June 2, 2004, on the Proposed U.N. Convention, Representative Tom Lantos and Eric Rosenthal (Executive Director, Mental Disability Rights International) lauded NCD's 2002-2004 work on the proposed U.N. Convention. This is noted in the *Congressional Record*, In the House of Representatives, for Wednesday, June 2, 2004. The Plenary of the U.N. General Assembly adopted the U.N. Convention on December 16, 2006.

## **Public Education and Outreach Impact**

During Fiscal Year 2007, relevant data demonstrate that NCD was successful in reaching more of the public and our stakeholders in every part of the United States through several effective methods of obtaining much needed feedback or disseminating information necessary to achieve our mission. Information dissemination continued to grow at record levels for NCD, as it responded to thousands of telephone calls, e-mail messages, and letters from concerned people and organizations about disability issues.

### **Internet**

NCD staff and Council members take advantage of the cost effective and efficient communications and assistive technology capabilities through the use of the Internet by sending and receiving 365,000 emails per year. The majority of our staff, Council members and stakeholders have disabilities, and utilizing assistive technology to communicate via the Internet enables them to participate fully in dialogue and deliberations on NCD matters. This practice fosters an environment for free exchange of ideas as the council members go about the business of promoting best practices, policies and programs.

The NCD Web site ([www.ncd.gov](http://www.ncd.gov)) receives an astounding 12 million visits per year as a result of persons wanting access to our reports and studies. Additionally, many disability-related and governmental web sites include a link to our website which bolsters the number of visitors who are seeking information on disability issues and policy. During this past year, 530,886 reports and papers were downloaded, saving taxpayers literally thousands of dollars in printing, handling, and mailing costs. In addition, the NCD listserv has 1,900 subscribers. Many of those subscribers share NCD messages, news advisories, and news releases with their own listservs, exponentially increasing our public outreach.

### **Media Coverage**

NCD also works closely with media sources around the world. This symbiotic relationship helps spread much needed information about people with disabilities and issues related to disability policy to every corner of the globe. News stories on NCD issues and the reports it releases to the President and Congress are frequently published in the United States and such far away lands as Australia, New Zealand, India, South Korea, and closer to home in Great Britain. During the fiscal year, there were 601 media placements of news items related to NCD. Several editorials were also spawned by the release of NCD publications. The latest was a supportive editorial in August prompted by the release of two NCD reports on the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In addition, NCD utilizes US Newswire and PR Newswire to distribute its news releases and news advisories to major media markets in Washington, DC, and throughout the country. As a result of this relationship, NCD news items are also distributed to every member of Congress and 3,600 of the world's most widely accessed Web sites, databases, and online services, including AOL, Google, and Yahoo. Readership is in the millions.

### **NCD Web Site**

NCD is now revamping its Web site to be more user-friendly. For instance, NCD is converting its publications section from a chronological listing to an issues listing. Those issues will include the Americans with Disabilities Act, civil rights, disability statistics and research, education, emergency preparedness and homeland security, employment, GPRA, health care, housing, international, mental health, progress reports, technology, and transportation. Although the site is fully Section 508 compliant, NCD is moving to enhance features that will make it more accessible and more user-friendly.

### **NCD Reports**

In FY 2007, NCD mailed reports to 9,600 people and organizations. Beginning in FY 2008, with the release of a new report on employment, NCD will no longer mail reports or its newsletter to Members of Congress. Instead, NCD will take full advantage of the rules of the House and Senate mail rooms and have its publications distributed free-of-charge to each member of Congress on the day they arrive. NCD estimates a cost saving in postage alone of approximately \$1,500 per report. An added benefit of this newly initiated procedure will mean that NCD publications are delivered to Congress on the day they are released to the public. In the past, using a government-approved JWOD mailing house delayed the arrival of NCD publications by weeks due to handling and irradiation of U.S. Mail to Congress.

In addition, NCD will also begin a new process where it will print only the executive summaries of large NCD reports. By adopting this policy, we anticipate that printing

costs in FY 2008 will be cut nearly in half. NCD will continue its long-standing practice of posting all reports in their entirety on the NCD Web site.

## **NCD Newsletter**

NCD's monthly newsletter, *NCD Bulletin*, provides readers with an update on NCD current and future activities and other disability-related items of interest. The newsletter is published 12 times a year and reaches millions of readers when it is published on the NCD listserv, US Newswire, and PR Newswire; this is the same distribution network used for NCD news releases and news advisories.

## **Foreign Visitors**

In 1995, NCD was designated by the U.S. Department of State to be the U.S. government's official contact point for disability issues. Specifically, NCD interacts with the special rapporteur of the United Nations Commission for Social Development on disability matters. NCD is also designated by the Department of State to host several visits each year from foreign delegations that express an interest in United States disability-related laws and programs. This fiscal year alone, NCD provided technical assistance and outreach to several different foreign delegations. NCD met with representatives of Bulgaria, China (two visits), India, Uganda, Sudan, Vietnam, Norway, Australia, Qatar, Egypt, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Gaza, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen.

## **Public Participation at NCD Quarterly Meetings**

Public participation at NCD quarterly meetings has risen dramatically during FY 2007. Three participants attended NCD's first quarterly meeting in October 2006 (Washington, DC) with one person delivering public comments. At our most recent quarterly meeting in July (Chicago), there were 130 participants and 32 public comments. Another 100 of our stakeholders in the disability community participated in an NCD-sponsored reception for leaders in the local disability community.

This reaching out to local disability communities was accomplished by the redirection of our budget to conduct meetings around the country so we can carry out our mandate to get public comment and input to identify emerging trends in the disability arena so appropriate public policy can be developed. Our three-day quarterly meetings held in different regions included local panel presentations to the council, to enable us to carry out our primary mandate to identify and promote the best practices, policies and programs that benefit people with disabilities.

## **NCD QUARTERLY MEETINGS**

As required by Section 400(3)(c) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, NCD met on four occasions during FY 2007.

Washington, DC, October 30 – 31, 2006

San Diego, CA, January 29 – 31, 2007

Atlanta, GA, April 16 – 17, 2007

Chicago, IL, July 24 – 26, 2007

Plus two teleconference meetings of the full Council.



**NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY**  
**Members**  
(as of September 10, 2007)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Confirmation</u>	<u>Expiration</u>	<u>Reconfirmed</u>	<u>Expiration</u>
1. John R. Vaughn Chairperson	8-3-06	9-17-07		
2. Patricia Pound First Vice Chairperson	7-26-02	9-17-02	11-14-02	9-17-05
3. Milton Aponte, J.D.	9-26-02	9-17-03	11-20-04	9-17-06
4. Robert R. Davila, Ph.D.	7-29-02	9-17-03	11-20-04	9-17-06
5. Victoria Ray Carlson	8-3-06	9-17-07		
6. Chad Colley	8-3-06	9-17-07		
7. Graham Hill	9-26-02	9-17-02	9-26-02	9-17-05
8. Marylyn Howe	6-22-07	9-17-08		
9. Young Woo Kang, Ph.D.	7-26-02	9-17-03	11-20-04	9-17-06
10. Kathleen Martinez	7-26-02	9-17-03	11-20-04	9-17-06
11. Lisa Mattheiss	8-3-06	9-17-07		
12. Lonnie Moore	6-22-07	9-17-08		
13. Anne M. Rader	6-19-03	9-17-04		
14. Cynthia Wainscott	5-25-07	9-17-08		
15. Linda Wetters	11-14-02	9-17-03	11-20-04	9-17-06