

The Center for Independent Living OPTIONS

January 10, 2003

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The Honorable Patrick Leahy
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Leahy:

KENTUCKY:
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Living Options, Inc. is
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City of Cincinnati
Department of Neighborhood
Services

and the generous
donations of many

On behalf of the staff and consumers of the Center for Independent Living Options (CILO), Inc., we write respectfully to urge you not to confirm Jeffrey S. Sutton to the Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, which would undermine the core protections and services afforded by Congress to persons with disabilities. Sutton has actively sought participation in numerous cases in which he has attempted to limit Congress's power to protect civil rights, including rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Medicaid. As a chief lawyer, he has engaged in a calculated effort, case after case, to take away the civil rights guaranteed to persons with disabilities and others.

In your position as member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, you have a unique opportunity to make a difference in the lives of children and adults with disabilities. Congress extending protections through federal civil rights laws will ensure that individuals with disabilities will not be segregated in institutions as professional opinion clearly states that we are better served in the community, impoverished children and adults will not be denied the basic medical care guaranteed to them under the Medicaid program, and State governments will not be free to exclude people with disabilities from their programs and services, which would include health care, education, roads and streets, public buildings, and welfare benefits, without fear of having to compensate those individuals for the discrimination they suffered.

As an advocacy organization, CILO has a strong commitment to assist people with disabilities in creating supports, so they can achieve their greatest personal potential and independence. We promote the protection and strengthening of the ADA and the IDEA, the expansion of home based services, improvement of access to health care, and increased choice and consumer control for individuals with disabilities. As CILO, Inc. serves individuals with a broad range of significant disabilities in seven counties included in the Cincinnati metropolitan area, we do not want to see those protections systematically stripped away as a result of the appointment of Jeffrey Sutton to the Sixth Circuit Court, which reviews appeals from the federal district Courts in Kentucky, Michigan, *Ohio* and Tennessee.

Resources to, for and by people with disabilities

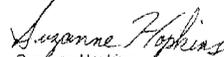
FROM : CENTER FOR ILD INC. PHONE NO. : 513 241 1707
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As Jeffrey Sutton poses a grave threat to the rights of individuals with disabilities, we request that you please honor your commitment to a strong ADA and refrain from nominating Jeffrey Sutton for the federal judgeship of the 6th Circuit Court. It is vital that the rights of Americans with disabilities lead lives of dignity, productivity and self-satisfaction in their communities without the fear of it being compromised. Please feel free to contact us at (513) 241-2600, should you have any questions or we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,


Lin Laing
Executive Director


Suzanne Hopkins
Director of Programs