



**BC Association
for Community Living**

Supporting people with developmental disabilities and their families

Hon. David Emerson, P.C., M.P.

House of Commons
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Dear Minister Emerson,

The BC Association for Community Living (BCACL) is a federation working with partners to build community and to enhance the lives of children, youth and adults with developmental disabilities and their families by supporting abilities, promoting action and advancing rights, responsibilities and social justice.

We are proud that B.C. was one of the first provinces in Canada to close all of its large institutions for people with developmental disabilities. British Columbians were the pioneers of the community living movement, holding dear the universal principle of dignity and justice for all persons.

BCACL strongly urges you to help promote and protect these principles around the world, by supporting the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The convention marks a clear reaffirmation that persons with disabilities have the right to full and equal enjoyment of their human rights.

Historically, Canada has provided international leadership on disability and human rights and has recently shown its leadership by actively engaging in the development of the UN CRPD. Urgent action is needed now to ensure that Canada continues to play a leadership role on disability. In March 2007 Canada signed the CRPD and in May 2008 the House of Commons unanimously adopted a motion supporting ratification of the CRPD. In order for Canada to participate in the upcoming Conference of States Parties and be able to make nominations to the CRPD Committee of Experts, **Canada must ratify the CRPD by October 3rd, 2008.**

You, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, are poised to demonstrate real leadership on this important issue. With your commitment, Canada can continue to play a landmark role in promoting dignity and justice for all persons. We are calling on you to take immediate steps to make ratification a reality.

Sincerely,

Rory Summers, President, BC Association for Community Living

