

BETTY McCOLLUM
4TH DISTRICT, MINNESOTA

1714 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-6631
FAX: (202) 225-1968

165 WESTERN AVENUE NORTH
SUITE 17
ST. PAUL, MN 55102
(651) 224-9191
FAX: (651) 224-3056

www.house.gov/mccollum



UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
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SENIOR DEMOCRATIC WHIP

CONGRESSIONAL GLOBAL
HEALTH CAUCUS, CO-FOUNDER

May 12, 2012

Partners in Policymaking
2233 University Avenue W, Suite 150
Saint Paul, MN 55114

Dear Friends:

Thank you for inviting me to the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of Partners in Policymaking. I regret that my schedule does not allow me to join you. Congratulations on this milestone!

During the past quarter century, Partners in Policymaking has trained 850 partner graduates in Minnesota, helping to advance significant progress for individuals with disabilities. But there is much more to do. As you know, only one-third of Americans with disabilities are employed and people with disabilities are three times more likely to live in poverty. This is unacceptable. Every American should have the opportunity to achieve economic independence, which is why we must strengthen federal programs to improve access to education, employment, health, and transportation for individuals with disabilities.

My office has been honored to be involved in Partners in Policymaking for more than ten years and hear from hundreds of partner participants about the importance of advocacy and sharing their stories. As a member of the House Appropriations and Budget Committees, I will continue to support and protect programs that empower people with disabilities to live productive and successful lives.

Again, thank you for your invitation today and for the advocacy of partners graduates. I look forward to working together with you to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

Sincerely,


Betty McCollum
Member of Congress