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Assistive Technology Funding Supported in Senate Bill

WASHINGTON, DC – The Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP) strongly supports S. 4100, *Supporting Children with Disabilities During COVID-19 Act*, introduced by United States Senators Chris Murphy (D-CT), Maggie Hassan (D-NH) and Chris Van Hollen D-(MD). This bill would provide \$55 million under the Assistive Technology (AT) Act to help address the increased need for assistive technology throughout the country due to COVID-19. The pandemic is changing the needs demanded by students and adults with disabilities of all ages as well as creating new barriers that need to be overcome so individuals can access the full breadth of delivery of direct services. An infusion to the AT Act would support state and community programs that assure individuals with disabilities have access to and can acquire the assistive technology services they need to live, work, and access education and services.

In response to the release of the *Supporting Children with Disabilities During COVID-19 Act*, Audrey Busch, Executive Director of the Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP) stated:

"This bill would ensure that our most vulnerable families, medical providers, schools, employers, and communities can access and acquire the proper assistive technology they need during the pandemic. State AT Act programs are uniquely positioned to address a variety of current front-line essentials to accommodate educational needs, remote working and learning environments; combat social isolation, and create innovative solutions to address a rapidly changing environment. We urge Congress to include this bill in next stimulus package so children and adults with disabilities have the access to the assistive technology needed during this global health crisis. We will continue to work with Congress and the Administration to ensure students and adults with disabilities and their families have access to the assistive technology and the necessary training for the needed devices throughout the pandemic and beyond."

About State AT Programs

State AT Act programs operate in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and four territories and are available for persons with all types of disabilities, all ages, in all environments (education, employment, community living and information technology). State AT programs provide a continuum of services that increase the access to, and acquisition of assistive technology through state financing activities (such as financial loans, cooperative buy, funds of last resort, etc.), device reutilization (including recycling, repair, refurbishment and device exchange), device loan/borrowing and device demonstration services.

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ATAP facilitates the coordination of state AT Programs nationally and provides technical assistance and support to its members. Established in 1997, the organization strives to enhance the effectiveness of AT Programs on the national, state, and local level.

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