

**Letter for Woodward Resource Center newsletter (as submitted)  
July 2012**

Once again, Sybil Finken (Glenwood Resource Center (IA) mom) and I went to Washington, D.C. in June (at our own expense) to attend VOR's annual membership meeting and make visits to Iowa's Congressional offices on behalf of Woodward and Glenwood Resource Centers. We continue to push for passage of House Bill 2032 which will require that before federally financed class action lawsuits (i.e. Dept. of Justice) against Medicaid certified and funded ICF's/MR can proceed, residents and their legal representatives must receive notice of the proposed class action and be given a time limited opportunity to opt out of the lawsuit. There is already substantial support for this bill, with 70 cosponsors, including 11 Judiciary Committee members, from a broad cross section of both parties.

We are also calling for a moratorium on Department of Justice forced closures of these same facilities around the country, mostly based on a "community ideology," until Congress has had time to review the ongoing evidence of massive abuse and neglect, sometimes leading to deaths due to residents being sent to communities unprepared to take care of them.

VOR is a national organization that advocates for high quality care and human rights for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and their families, and the **only** national advocacy organization that supports residential choice. VOR is 100% privately funded and receives more than 95% of its financial support from these families.

As VOR plans for the future, our challenges become our opportunities! We have been challenged with a decrease in membership due to economic conditions and ICF/MR closures, but these very challenges must inspire more people to step up their commitment to change; step up their commitment to VOR.

Thousands of individuals, families, and organizations support VOR through annual membership dues and additional contributions. VOR must strengthen our family advocacy, enhance our grassroots involvement and increase our membership numbers. Won't you please join us in this effort using the membership form below? Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

***Marilyn Straw***

Former WRC parent and current Human Rights Committee member