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July 25, 2014



Speaking out for people with intellectual & developmental disabilities



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VOR and YOU

1. **VOR Monthly Giving Opportunities!**

Monthly giving helps VOR to enhance and continue the good work we do protecting all people with I/DD.

Monthly giving helps you make a larger gift over time and it's a safe and reliable way to give!

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LEGAL BRIEFS

2. Oregon: Court Denies Intervenor in Lane v. Kitzhaber

Oregon Rehabilitation Association (ORA) * June 20, 2014 * by Attorney Dennis Koho

Summary:

ORA learned this week that the US District Court has denied a motion brought by seven individuals with disabilities to decertify the class in *Lane v. Kitzhaber*.

Overview:

This most recent ruling in this case DENIED the Motion to Intervene filed by seven individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are currently being served by sheltered workshops. In other words, those seven people are not allowed to join in the lawsuit at this point.

The Court took some effort to point out that the seven may be allowed to join the suit after a verdict on liability is reached but before any money or resources are allocated. The court felt that the interests of the seven were not at risk at when it comes to liability but very well may be when it comes to remediation.

The Court wrote at some length about the promises of the plaintiffs and the US government regarding their intent to not close workshops. While the Court repeated the promises and indicated it would hold them to their promises, it did not conclude for itself one way or the other about the results of this suit on sheltered workshops. In other words, while it is not the plaintiffs' intent, they may nevertheless find it a happy coincidence if their suit closes workshops. Others, of course, have different opinions and that was why the seven individuals attempted to join the suit.

We have a long way to go before this matter is finally decided and resources potentially reallocated as a result.

[Read full Court Order here](#)

3. Illinois: Murray Center Parents Gear Up for Appeal

97.9 WXF (Effingham, Illinois) * July 23, 2014

The Murray Parents Association is planning to appeal a ruling that allows Governor Quinn to shut down the Murray Developmental Center in Centralia.

Rita Winkeler says her son, like many other residents at Murray, have severe disabilities and would not survive in any other setting. Many parents argue the residents will end up in jails or in psychiatric wards where they really won't get the care they need.

Quinn has been trying to shut the Center down for several years now, hoping to save more than \$22 million.

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Coming Soon: Statement from families about Judge Aspen's decision

STATE NEWS

4. Virginia: Let's Tap the Brakes on Closing Training Centers

The News & Advance (Lynchburg,VA) * Editorial Board * July 20, 2014

Locally, state Sen. Steve Newman has been at the forefront of the efforts to save CVTC and the residential hospital care delivery model, often waging his battle against long odds and the opposition of both Democratic and Republican governors.

Last week, eight of Virginia's members of the U.S. House of Representatives — all three Democrats and five of eight Republicans — jumped into the fray, [sending a letter to Gov. Terry McAuliffe](#), imploring him to put the brakes on the process of closing four of the five training centers, selling the campuses and sending the residents into group home care.

The congressmen, including Reps. Bob Goodlatte and Robert Hurt, are worried about the same things as Newman and parents and guardians of the residents: that the closure timeline is rushed and arbitrary, that many guardians are simply not in favor of group-home settings for their charges and that there are some residents so profoundly disabled they likely could not survive outside a hospital setting.

The bipartisan letter from the state's congressional delegation backs up efforts by Sen. Newman to devise a solution more amenable to parents and guardians and more mindful of the care requirements of the most disabled of the training centers' residents. In this year's General Assembly session, Newman shepherded a bill to passage that created a working group of experts to study the care delivery system and suggest ways to better meet the needs of residents and wishes of guardians and family.

In their letter to Gov. McAuliffe, the congressmen write they've heard from numbers of their constituents that Richmond is moving too swiftly to close the training centers, and that that could result in their loved ones being forced into care settings that can't meet their intensive needs. The closure timeline, they contend, was arbitrarily set and doesn't reflect the reality on the ground for many residents of an appropriate number of group home beds or care delivery systems.

"Slow down the process, Gov. McAuliffe, and let the work group finish their study" is the congressmen's argument.

We concur and urge the governor to stand up for the rights of the most vulnerable Virginians in our midst.

[Read Congressional Letter](#)

Read Related: [Letter from Virginia State Senator Janet Howell to Governor McAuliffe](#)

FEDERAL NEWS

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5. Obama Signs Law Limiting Sheltered Workshop Eligibility

***Disability Scoop* * July 22, 2014**

The transition from school to work for students with disabilities will undergo sweeping changes under a bill President Barack Obama signed into law Tuesday.

The measure known as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act significantly limits placements at sheltered workshops and other work environments where people with disabilities earn less than minimum wage.

Under the new law, individuals with disabilities age 24 and younger will no longer be allowed to work for less than the federal minimum of \$7.25 per hour unless they first receive pre-employment transition services at school and try vocational rehabilitation services.

The measure also mandates that state vocational rehabilitation agencies work with schools to provide transition services to all students with disabilities and requires that the agencies allocate at least 15 percent of their federal funding toward such transition efforts.

[Read more, comment and share](#)

6. New Law Expands ACL's Capacity to Serve Americans with Disabilities

By Kathy Greenlee, Assistant Secretary for Aging and Administrator of ACL

Today, President Obama signed the "Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act" into law. This bipartisan bill, which recently passed the U.S. Senate by a vote of 95-3 and the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 415-6, makes important changes to disability programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act and the Assistive Technology Act, including the transfer of three programs from the Department of Education to the Administration for Community Living (ACL). With this law, the Independent Living programs, the National Institute on the Disability and Independent Living Rehabilitation Research, and the Assistive Technology Act programs will move to ACL.

[Read more, comment and share](#)

7. Justice Department Developing Disability Training For Police

***Disability Scoop* * July 21, 2014**

Plans are in the works at the U.S. Department of Justice to roll out law enforcement training focused on people with disabilities.

The Justice Department's Community Relations Service — a division that steps in to help communities address tension stemming from civil rights issues — is currently working on the effort, Attorney General Eric Holder said.

[Read more, comment and share](#)

8. Federal bill would create tax-free savings accounts for the disabled

Sara Wolff, 31, was born with Down syndrome, but that hasn't stopped her from becoming involved in politics. She's slated to speak Wednesday before the Senate Finance subcommittee on taxation and IRS oversight on the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act, which would create tax-free savings accounts for those with disabilities.

Earlier this year, she wrote a change.org petition calling on Congress to pass the ABLE Act. The petition now has more than 250,000 online signatures.

Support for the House bill is being led by Rep. Ander Crenshaw, Florida Republican; Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Washington Republican; Rep. Pete Sessions, Texas Republican; and Rep. Chris Van Hollen, Maryland Democrat.

"The bill aims to ease financial strains faced by individuals with disabilities by making tax-free savings accounts available to cover qualified expenses such as education, housing and transportation," said an NDSS statement.

Having a bill clear the Senate these days is like winning the lottery, but the ABLE Act appears primed to beat the odds. It has 74 Senate co-sponsors, including Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and GOP Minority Leader Mitch McConnell.

"Passing this landmark legislation will go a long way to help people with Down syndrome and other disabilities realize and achieve their own hopes, dreams and aspirations," NDSS Vice President of Advocacy and Affiliate Relations Sara Hart Weir said in a statement.

[Read more, comment and share](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE

9. Why Word Of Mouth Marketing Is The Most Important Social Media

Forbes Magazine * July 17, 2014

Word of Mouth Marketing (WOMM). Isn't this really the original social media platform? I grew up with the famous Faberge commercial that showed a woman who "told 2 friends" about the product and how "they told 2 friends ... and so on ... and so on". Hasn't WOM always been a powerful way to influence business results?

[Read more, comment and share](#)

Quotable

"It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets credit." ~ Harry S. Truman

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Calendar Reminders:

Sunday, October 5, 2014

American Health Care Association's 2014 ID/DD Residential Services Day during AHCA/NCAL's 65th Annual Convention & Expo at the Gaylord National Harbor just outside of Washington, DC. Registration information and the schedule can be

found [here](#).

Archives

* **Thursday, March 20, 2014**

VOR's "Regional Meetings: The Need for Advocates to Act Global and Local" Webinar.

***Social Media Strengths: Using Facebook and Twitter to Advance Your Cause (VOR, July 2013).** [Visit VOR's website for a copy of the powerpoint presentation and an audio of the event.](#)

* **How Congress Works Webinar: [Recorded - Listen Here](#).** Tuesday, April 23, 2013 - 12:00 pm central / 1:00 pm eastern. How Congress Works: The Basics. Hosted by Peter Kinzler and Larry Innis.

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