

Ed Armstrong

From: Beth Weinstein [bethweinstein@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Thursday, June 24, 2004 10:25 AM
To: Sherilyn Kent
Subject: VOR speaks for us

VOR members just got back from Washington, D.C. where we visited every congressional district with good success. Our annual mission representing VOR members was received for the most part with concern and interest. The Senators and Representatives were receptive to our agenda. But there's more we can do. We need to make sure the wheel is very "squeaky". That's our Mission AND this is where you can help.

If you haven't done it already, please contact your Senators and Representative at home in the state offices in support of VOR'S position on Medicaid and the preservation of choice. President Nancy Ward's letter that accompanied VOR's packets of information follows. It summarizes what we did in our visits to legislators and VOR's position on issues.

To get the complete leave behind folders for your legislators or to get information and guidance on who to call and what to say, just contact the office at VOR, 5005 Newport Dr., #108, Rolling Meadows, IL 60008. Phone 847-253-6020. Or email The.Voice@sbcglobal.net . We will make it easy for you. Now is the perfect time to follow up - while our visit is still fresh in the minds of our elected members of Congress.

The energy, information and rejuvenation experienced by the participants were unmatched. We had a record number of attendees this year; the numbers really do matter. It's all about how many votes are represented by VOR's agenda.

Help us "squeak" for you. We hope that next year you can be part of the networking, empowerment and knowledge that was the VOR Annual Meeting and Washington D.C. Initiative xperience.

Sincerely,

Sherilyn Kent
 Utah State Coordinator

VOICE OF THE RETARDED

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June 14, 2004

Dear Member of Congress,

During the week of June 14, 2004, VOR members are visiting your office to share VOR's information. VOR is truly honored to have the opportunity to meet with you and your staff. We appreciate very much the time and hospitality you extend to us each and every year.

This year, we share with you our perspective with regard to Medicaid. As our materials reflect, we are concerned about the future viability of Medicaid. We will be calling upon you to "**Do the Right Thing**" so that our Medicaid-eligible family members and your constituents with mental retardation can continue to count on receiving critically important acute and long term care benefits.

Our Request Of You Is Simple: Protect Medicaid and Preserve Choice

When debating the future of Medicaid, please support policies that maintain the fiscal and programmatic integrity of the Medicaid program so that it can continue providing all critical "lifeline" services to the full spectrum of individuals with disabilities, including persons with mental retardation. Preserve choice based on need.

6/25/2004

To assist in explaining our perspective, VOR Initiative participants will share with you the following resources:

Do Not Cut Medicaid: VOR's position concerning Medicaid cuts and block grants.

Medicaid Chart: A handy Medicaid reference detailing mandatory and optional acute and long term care services.

Academic Community Resource Centers: A vision for successful and safe community integration: One cost-effective solution to expanding Medicaid community-based health care options for people with mental retardation and developmental disabilities.

As you know from our past visits, VOR is the only national advocacy organization that supports a full array of residential options including community-based supports and Intermediate Care Facilities for Persons with Mental Retardation (ICFs/MR). Given that other organizations will suggest eliminating ICFs/MR, VOR shares with you the following comprehensive information about Medicaid and its impact on the lives of individuals with mental retardation in the hope of assisting you in the difficult debate ahead:

- **The Myth of an "Institutional Bias" in Medicaid for Persons with Mental Retardation**
- **Opposition to S. 971 and H.R. 2032, The Medicaid Community-Based Attendant Services and Supports Act (MiCASSA)**
- **Opposition to Money Follows the Individual Proposals**
- **Voice of the Retarded Supports a Temporary Increase to the Federal Medicaid Assistance Percentage (FMAP)**
- **Fixing the Community First**
- **Defining Choice** (references to the legal right of choice in residential options)
- **Characteristics of Residents of Large State MR/DD Facilities (June 30, 2002)**

If you have any questions at any time, VOR is a ready and willing national resource. Thank you again for your time and past support for programs serving citizens with mental retardation.

Sincerely,

Nancy Ward

President