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VOR ACTION ALERT

Wednesday, June 9, 2009

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THANK YOU!

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1. Request for Action!

Next week, beginning on Monday, June 15, VOR members from around the country will be meeting with Members of Congress and their staff in Washington, D.C.

They will be seeking support for H.R. 1255 and sharing our concerns regarding the abuses of some DD Act programs, including some state DD Councils and some state Protection and Advocacy agencies.

They need YOUR help.

By calling or faxing Congressional offices next week you will be supporting VOR advocates "on the ground" in Washington, D.C., by showing Members and their staff that these issues are supported by constituents back home.

PLEASE CALL or FAX anytime, but especially Monday, June 15 - Wednesday, June 17, for the greatest impact.

Contact information for Congress, plus template call and fax messages are below. For additional resources relating to H.R. 1255, visit <http://vor.net/HR1255positions.htm>.

THANK YOU!!!!

2. Congressional Contact Information

To identify your Representative, visit <http://www.congress.org>. The Capitol Switchboard can also identify your Representative and connect you to their offices: 1-202-224-3121.

At <http://www.congress.org>, you can also get direct phone and fax numbers by typing in your zip code.

Contact Tamie Hopp at 605-399-1624 or Tamie327@hotmail.com for any questions or help.

3. Template Phone Message

Note: In some states, Protection and Advocacy goes by a different name. To find out what this agency is called in your state, visit: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/add/states/pas.html>

Phone Message - Template

"I am your constituent and a member of VOR. I am writing to ask that Rep. _____ co-sponsor H.R. 1255, introduced by Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA).

"This legislation, if passed, will require that federally funded lawyer groups must give me the opportunity to 'opt out' of the lawsuit when a lawsuit is proposed targeting my son/daughter's home, an intermediate care facility for persons with mental retardation. Right now, federally funded lawyer groups, such as Protection and Advocacy, don't have to even tell me they will be filing a lawsuit and representing my loved one. As a guardian, I think I should be the one to decide, not a federally-paid attorney. H.R. 1255 will address this inequity.

Please ask Rep. _____ to co-sponsor H.R. 1255. The contact to call in Rep. Frank's office is Pilar Faló, Legislative Counsel (225-5931)."

4. Template Fax/Written Message

Date

PLEASE CO-SPONSOR H.R. 1255

Dear

I am your constituent and a member of VOR. This week, a VOR representative will be visiting your office in Washington, D.C. to ask that you cosponsor H.R. 1255, legislation introduced earlier this year by Rep. Barney Frank. You will receive a folder that includes background about this important legislation. Thank you for taking the time to receive this information and learn more about H.R. 1255.

Please COSPONSOR H.R. 1255.

H.R. 1255 requires that before federally-financed class action lawsuits against Medicaid licensed Intermediate Care Facilities for Persons with Mental Retardation (ICFs/MR) can proceed, residents and their legal guardians/conservators must be notified. They can then opt out of the lawsuit, or do nothing and join in.

Families want the right to decide whether or not these lawsuits, supposedly filed on behalf of their family members, are what are needed. These decisions are best left to families.

Families recognize that the ICF/MR service model is precious. This model gives due consideration to the chronic medical needs of many people with mental retardation and developmental disabilities. The families also recognize that the court system is being used to further the agenda of eliminating the ICF/MR model of care.

The opinions of families regarding our mentally retarded family members should be sought and respected. That has not generally been the case.

We appreciate the understanding of the 27 cosponsors from both sides of the aisle that support H.R. 1255. Please join the as a cosponsor of H.R. 1255.

Contact Pilar Falo, Legislative Counsel to Rep. Barney Frank 5-5931.
Passage of this law will restore the voice of families. That's just good common sense.

Sincerely,

Name and contact information

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THANKYOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!!!!