

On Target

Informing Indiana About
Disability Issues

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On Target is a monthly publication of the Indiana Governor's Council for People with Disabilities.

We welcome your suggestions for newsletter content and ideas concerning the actions of the Council. *On Target* is made available in accessible formats upon request.

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State bill adds voter identification requirement

Legislation requires voters to present valid photo ID, but lawsuit pending

In late April, Gov. Mitch Daniels signed legislation that creates a new voting requirement for Hoosiers. The bill, which will take effect July 1, requires voters to show a current, state or federal government-issued photo ID before casting a ballot.

"Constituents across the state expressed their whole-hearted support of this initiative," said the bill's author, State Sen. Vic Heinold, in a statement. "People want to know that their vote counts and that the deceit of corrupt individuals cannot threaten that right."

Voters who are unable or unwilling to produce valid photo identification at the polling place may cast a provisional ballot. For that vote to count, however, the voter must provide proof of identification to the circuit court clerk or county election board before noon on the Monday after the election. The circuit court clerk or county election board may accept the ballot without photo identification if the voter, who must sign an affidavit, is "indigent [and] unable to obtain proof of identification without the payment of a fee" or "has a religious objection to being

photographed," according to the legislation.

Five other states have voter identification requirements, but Indiana's law is the strictest. Additionally, it is the target of a lawsuit filed by the Indiana Civil Liberties Union on behalf of the Indianapolis Resource Center for Independent Living, the NAACP, United Senior Action of Indiana, Concerned Clergy of Indianapolis, the Indiana Coalition for Housing and Homeless Issues, and others.

"It's going to make it much more difficult for people to vote without any real reason for the difficulty," said Ken Falk, ICLU legal director. While the law targets voter fraud, there is no significant evidence of such fraud occurring at polling places, Falk said. Rather, he said, the real evidence of fraud is related to absentee ballots, which the legislation does not address.

"This bill will be a safeguard [against] fraud," said Cody Kendall, co-general counsel of the Indiana Election Division.

"Although there have been no reports on in-poll voter fraud as there have been for absentee ballots, this is looking to the future to protect the integrity of elections."

The legislation guarantees free photo IDs to people who cannot afford them. However, the lawsuit claims the legislation still disenfranchises some Hoosiers, particularly those with lower incomes.

"You can't just show up at the license branch," Falk said. "You have to have the right papers - an original birth certificate and other documentation ... That could be a lengthy and expensive process."

There is no exception in the law for those who

cannot obtain a birth certificate, Falk said. This has created concern for some people with disabilities and other voters who have limited knowledge of their birth circumstances or family history.

Implementation of the legislation may be delayed by the lawsuit. Watch for updates in future issues of On Target.

Getting an ID

The Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles requires the following documents to issue a new driver license or identification card:

- One "primary document," such as a stamped or sealed birth certificate, U.S. passport, U.S. military ID, or certificate of naturalization or citizenship.
- An additional primary document or a "secondary document," which could include a Medicaid card, bank statement, academic transcript, Hoosier Rx card, gun permit, insurance card, major credit card, computer-generated paycheck stub, school-issued photo ID or report card, W-2 form, or other document.
- One "proof of Social Security number," such as a Social Security card or U.S. military ID.*
- One "proof of Indiana residency document," such as a current bill or benefit statement, property deed or tax assessment, or voter registration card. The document must contain the applicant's current name and address (no post office boxes).**

*An applicant for an Indiana ID card is not required to present social security documentation.

**A "primary" or "secondary" document may also

meet the Indiana residency requirement as long as the applicant's name and correct address are shown on the document.

For a complete listing, visit www.in.gov/bmv/driverlicense/idreq.html or call a local BMV branch.

Mini-Marathon draws wheelchair athletes

In early May, the 500 Festival Mini-Marathon attracted participants from across the globe. While the top spots in the wheelchair division were captured by participants from other states, Hoosiers also placed well in the competition.

In the men's division, Krige Schabort of Georgia set the fastest time of 44:20. Butch Martin, of Fishers, Ind., was the top-ranked Indiana resident, completing the race in 49:36. Other Hoosiers at the top of the rankings in the men's division were:

Chad Johnson
(Indianapolis) - 53:16

Mike Gillam
(Muncie) - 1:12:12

Jonathan Mize
(Muncie) - 1:12:18

Gary Baker
(Indianapolis) - 1:13:52

Bryan Rohl
(Westfield) - 1:23:28

Placing first in the women's division was Illinois resident Miriam Nibley, with a time of 1:00:02. The top-ranked Hoosier was Nadine Willis of

South Bend, with a time of 3:34:25.

Registration is now open for the 2006 event. Visit www.500festival.com/marathon for more information.

Changes planned for education law to impact students with disabilities

More students with disabilities would take alternate, non-grade-level tests under proposed changes to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) outlined by U.S. Education Secretary Margaret Spellings.

NCLB is the education reform law designed to ensure student academic achievement.

Current NCLB guidelines allow school districts to test just 1 percent of students at their instructional level rather than their grade level. The proposed changes expand the number of students who can be tested at their instructional level to 3 percent.

The proposed NCLB rule changes have led to disagreement among disability advocates and educators.

Some disability advocates are calling for more time, research and information to assess the proposed rule changes.

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD), a group of 28 national disability organizations, expressed its concerns in a letter to Secretary Spellings. CCD requested a personal meeting with the secretary and called for the department to delay any policy implementation until the research basis proves applicable for affected students and appropriate assessment tools, training and technical assistance programs are developed and disseminated.

The letter states: "This policy and the timeline proposed for implementation greatly compromise both the philosophical and practical promise of No Child Left Behind. As currently described, this policy should not, and indeed, cannot be implemented in the 2005-2006 school year."

Others, however, feel that the proposed changes allow the progress of students with disabilities to be measured with assessment instruments that are better designed for the needs of students with disabilities.

Several state superintendents expressed approval, as did both national teachers unions and several members of Congress.

"Now more students with disabilities will have their progress measured more appropriately," said National Education Association President Reg Weaver in a statement.

Secretary Spellings also announced an additional \$14 million for immediate support to identify and assess students with disabilities.

States will receive the additional flexibility and funding if they can show they are meeting annual progress targets, including academic improvement measures, for all students, including students with disabilities.

Look in future issues of On Target for updates on the proposed rulemaking.

Students reflect positive attitudes in winning essays

In early April, six Indiana children were honored as winners of the 10th annual "Attitude" essay contest, sponsored by the Council and United Cerebral Palsy Association of Greater Indiana. The winners responded, along with more than

900 other students, to the contest's goal of examining how attitudes about disability can create - or break down - barriers for people with disabilities in Indiana communities.

"The inspiration for the contest was a young girl in Fort Wayne who wrote a letter to Santa Claus asking for one day when her fellow students would not make fun of her because of her cerebral palsy," said Donna Roberts, UCPAGI executive director. "We set out to try to influence a generation to consider the abilities of their peers with disabilities, and we think the interest level and the essays themselves prove that we're succeeding."

In addition to the six winning students, Fairview Elementary School in Logansport was honored for nine years of participation and the submission of more than 500 essays.

Essay Winners

Third/fourth grade, first place - Paige Pressler,
Kennedy Academy, South Bend
Fifth/sixth grade, first place - Brock Cowgill,
Upland Elementary School, Upland
Fifth/sixth grade, second place - Tiffany Nelson,
Upland Elementary School, Upland
Seventh/eighth grade, first place - Shae Lauer,
Northfield High School, Wabash
Seventh/eighth grade, second place - Sequoia
Murray, Knox Middle School, Knox

Note: Not pictured is Thurman Dieter, the second place winner in the third/fourth-grade category. Dieter attends Kennedy Academy in South Bend.

Celebrate siblings with Indiana Sibshops

Having a sibling with a disability can bring both rewards and challenges. The Sibshop curriculum,

offered around the world to the brothers and sisters of children with disabilities, provides valuable opportunities to learn and find peer support in a recreational context.

The following programs are Indiana "registered Sibshops," which means that the facilitators and administrators ascribe to the goals and spirit of the Sibshop model. To learn more, contact the Sibshop nearest you.

Amy Lupfer, Laurie Seals
Evansville Arc Child Life Center
615 W. Virginia St.
Evansville, IN 47710
(812) 428-5433 (voice)
alupfer@evansvillearc.org

Christina Rogers
Community Education and Child Advocacy
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11363 S. State Road 43
Brookston, IN 47923
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Marissa Runkle
Supersibs
Logan Center
1235 N. Eddy St.
South Bend, IN 46617
(574) 289-4831 x1043 (voice)
marissar@logancenter.org
www.nd.edu/~supersib/

Of Note

Disability magazine offering internships

ABILITY Magazine and ABILITY Awareness are offering internship and graduate assistance programs for students. Internships are offered to students who have demonstrated superior academic ability and have disability-related interests. The graduate assistantship program offers a limited number of stipends to students who have completed at least one year of graduate study. Visit www.abilitymagazine.com for more information.

Get involved in polling place accessibility activities

County election officials are working to ensure polling place accessibility by the state Help America Vote Act deadline (Jan. 1, 2006), and they are getting help from local advisory councils composed of senior citizens, people with disabilities and others in the community. These councils are making recommendations for positive change and helping to ensure that all people are able to participate in the electoral process on Election Day. To get involved, contact your county clerk.

Order free credit report now

Thanks to the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act, you can now obtain free copies of your credit report to help guard against identity theft. You are entitled to one free report each year from each of the three national consumer credit reporting companies. Visit www.annualcreditreport.com or call (877) 322-8228 (voice).

Celebrate the 15th anniversary of the ADA

You are invited to Indiana's statewide celebration of the 15th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Join us on July 26 at the Artsgarden at Circle Centre Mall in

downtown Indianapolis from 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for an afternoon of presentations, displays and entertainment. Visit www.adaindiana.org for more information or contact Matt Norris or Vicki Pappas at (800) 825-4733 (voice) or adainfo@indiana.edu (e-mail)

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