

# *Disability Advocacy Collaborative Bulletin*

## *Disability Rights is a Civil Rights Issue*

*May, 2005*

If you want something to appear in the next edition or have an article you would like us to include, please send it to us--[jayne@kleinmanconsulting.com](mailto:jayne@kleinmanconsulting.com) and [skoslosk03@comcast.net](mailto:skoslosk03@comcast.net)--or Jayne Kleinman, 55 Corrigan Ave., Meriden, CT 06451, 203-238-9391.

**ADDRESS CORRECTIONS AND REMOVALS:** If you are not interested in receiving this information or you would like this information sent to a different e-mail address, please e-mail Jayne Kleinman at [jayne@kleinmanconsulting.com](mailto:jayne@kleinmanconsulting.com) with your request, or simply reply to this message.

This Bulletin is supported in large part by a grant the Disability Advocacy Collaborative has received from the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities. In addition, in-kind support is being provided by the UConn Center on Disability, and Communitas, Inc. has agreed to serve as the project's fiscal agent. To all three we extend our appreciation.

### **In This Issue**

	<i>Page</i>
<b>Calendar of Events</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>State Legislative Update</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Update on the Disability Advocacy Collaborative</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ADACC Hires Project Director</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>PEETA</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Housing Alert</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Celebrate with Communitas</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Disability Awareness</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Mammogram Initiative</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Memory Loss Caregiver Help Study and State Respite Care</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Social Role Valorization</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Asset-Based Community Development Workshop</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>People First Theme Sought</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>BRS Wants to Hear From You</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Do you Have a Memorable Teacher?</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>National Council on Disability Seeks ADA Testimony</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>National ADA Symposium</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Social Security</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Judicial Nominee Raises Concerns</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Assisted Suicide Law in Oregon</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>2005 White House Conference on Aging</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Paralyzed Veterans of America Newsletter</b>	<b>15</b>

## Calendar of Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Contact</u>
May 4, 2005 – 3:00 – 6 pm	BRS Public Meeting	Goodwill Industries, Bridgeport	Bureau of Rehabilitation Services	evelyn.knight@po. state.ct.us
May 4, 2005 - 3:00 - 4:30 pm	Interim Report on Best Practices in Employment of People w/ Disabilities in State Govt.	webcast	Dis. Law Resource Project, Equal Employ. Opportunities Commission	www.ilru.org
May 5, 2005 - 6:00 – 8:00 pm	Forum with the state Department of Children and Families & the Court Support Services Division	Career High School, New Haven	PEETA (see page 5)	1-203-641-8667
May 6, 2005 9:00 am - 1:00 pm	Housing First Conference	Stanley Works, New Britain	New Britain Continuum of Care, Partnership for Strong Communities and Corp. for Supportive Housing	Nancy Milano 1-860- 225-0211
May 12, 2005 – 7:00 – 9:00 pm	People First meeting	The ARC of Litchfield County in Torrington	People First	1-203-792-3540 advozealot@aol.com
May 13, 2005	Preparing for the Road Ahead: Transition to College for Students with Disabilities	Southern CT State University	SCSU, SERC, CSDE and the Disability. Resource Center	860-632-1485, Ext. 241
May 14, 2005 9 am – 12 pm	Brain Injury Resource Fair	Hospital for Special Care in New Britain	Brain Injury Assn. of CT	800-278-8242
May 15, 2005 12-4:00 pm	“Come celebrate with Communitas”	Manchester Community College	MCC Institute on Disability and Inclusion	860-512-2789 bevjackson@aol.com
May 17, 2005 6:00-7:30 pm	Risks of Alzheimer’s Disease and Dementia for People with Disabilities	Senior Options Program, Trumbull	The Kennedy Center, Inc.	wbloch@kennedyctr.org

May 17-19, 2005	National ADA Symposium	Overland Park, Kansas	Disability Law Resource Project at ILRU	www.adaproject.org/symposium
May 18, 2005 - 8:00 – 12:00 pm	Housing CT: A Mayor's Forum on Affordable Housing	Aqua Turf, Plantsville	CT Mortgage Bankers Assn., Partnership for Strong Communities, CT Housing Coalition	cmba.org 860-232-9141
May 19, 2005 10:00 am - 12:00 pm	Transportation Forum	Town Hall Annex, Groton	UCONN Center on Disabilities	jkleinman@uchc.edu 860-679-1575
May 23, 2005 7:30 pm	Community Building with John McKnight	Farmington Library	FVGLA/DD Council	860-673-6791
May 24, 2005 - 10:00 am - 12:00 pm	Transportation Forum	Manchester Community College	UCONN Center on Disabilities	jkleinman@uchc.edu 860-679-1575
May 24, 2005 – 1:00 – 3:00	Supportive Housing Basics	Torrington Chamber of Commerce	Partnership for Strong Communities	www.ctpartnershiphousing.com or Kate Kelly at 860-244-0066
May 25, 2005	Social Role Valorization Training “Use of Restraints”	CCSU	DD Council/SRV Implementation Project	Ed Preneta 860-418-6157
May 26, 2005	Conference on Serving Youth & Adults with Learning Disabilities	Marriott Hotel Farmington, CT	Capitol Region Education Council	www.crec.org
June 3-4, 2005	Moving through Life Changes/Self Determination	Farmington Marriott Hotel	DD Council, DMR, and FAVOR	Email: yvette.johnson@po.state.ct.us (860) 418-8709
July 25	15 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ADA			
July 25-28, 2005	Youth Leadership Forum	UConn campus - Storrs	CT YLF	www.ctdol.state.ct.us/ylf/default.htm
Aug. 8-12, 2005	Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp	St. Joseph's College, West Hartford	Hospital for Special Care	860-267-2457 860-832-6220
Oct. 23-26, 2005	White House Conference on Aging	Washington, D.C.		www.whcoa.gov

## **State Legislative Update**

As reported in previous issues of The Bulletin, it is impossible for us to keep up with the fast moving activities of the State legislature. We therefore refer you to the website of the Office of Protection and Advocacy. There you can see updated info on state legislative actions by clicking on "Legislative Information" on the left side of the home page: [www.ct.gov/opapd/site/default.asp](http://www.ct.gov/opapd/site/default.asp). Then click on "Legislation Update." If you want a hard copy of the Update go to the very bottom of the screen where there is a link for a printable version.

The General Assembly produces its own comprehensive Legislative Bulletin on its website at: [www.cga.ct.gov/](http://www.cga.ct.gov/). To find the bulletin just look under the "Calendar" and you will see "CGA Today." Under that heading you will find "Bulletin."

## **Update on the Disability Advocacy Collaborative**

The Disability Advocacy Collaborative is moving forward in its plans to hold a statewide Disability Convention in the fall of 2006. Here is a brief update:

- To reach out and involve the maximum number of participants, local disability networks will be created in six regions of the state - NorthWest, NorthCentral, NorthEast, SouthWest, SouthCentral, and SouthEast; independent living centers and other disability advocacy groups will be involved in this process
- A Steering Committee – as broadly representative as possible, and still be effective – is being created; one of the Collaborative's objectives is to create cross disability, ethnically diverse, age and gender balanced disability coalitions at the regional level, and the Steering Committee will reflect that representation
- Introductory workshops to kick off the initiative in the six regions will be held after the state legislative session ends in June
- Coalition building and empowerment workshops will take place at the regional level in the fall, winter and spring of 2006
- A disability "platform" will be developed during 2006 that will be presented at the convention; the platform will identify the critical issues facing individuals with disabilities and families, and outline a course of action to be presented to candidates for state office.

Anyone interested in participating in regional organization and training activities is asked to contact either Jayne Kleinman or Stan Kosloski.

## **ADACC Hires Project Director**

The ADA Coalition of Connecticut has announced the hiring of Lisa Caron as Project Director. Lisa replaces Elanah Sherman who left the organization in September to take a job with the state Office of Protection and Advocacy. Elanah has been a mainstay in the Connecticut ADA education and training field for a number of years. She left big shoes to fill.

### **Update on P.A.T.H.S. (Plan for the Achievement of Transportation Coordination in Human Services)**

As reported in last month's issue of "The Bulletin", the University of Connecticut Center on Disabilities, under a grant from the Council on Developmental Disabilities, is sponsoring a series of forums on transportation. Jayne Kleinman, Project Coordinator, is interested in hearing from people with disabilities who use various local bus services and specialized transportation services in order to help shape the DOT State Action Plan for a coordinated human service transportation system. Interested parties are invited to attend the forums and share personal experiences regarding:

- ❖ What programs/services are working well?
- ❖ What are the biggest gaps/barriers/obstacles you experience?
- ❖ What are your needs for travel-training and customer service?
- ❖ What are the most important areas for action?

The two upcoming forums are on May 19, 10:00 am - 12:00 noon in the Town Hall Annex in Groton (co-sponsored by the Disabilities Network of Eastern Connecticut and the Groton Real Choice Task Force) and on May 24, 1:00 - 3:00 pm at Manchester Community College (co-sponsored by Communitas). Please RSVP to attend. Be sure to articulate any accommodation you may need. Limited funds are available for transportation. Contact: Jayne J. Kleinman - Phone: (860) 679-1575; TTY: (860) 679-1502; Toll free: (866) 623-1315; and Email: jkleinman@uchc.edu .

There will be four more forums in July and August.

### **PEETA Invitation**

PEETA (Parent Empowerment through Education, Training, and Advocacy) is hosting their monthly meeting on May 5, 2005, from 6:00-8:00 pm at Career High School, 140 Legion Street in New Haven. The group will meet with key agency leaders from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division (CSSD). These agencies, along with community stakeholders, are in

the process of developing a Joint Strategic Plan to improve service delivery for children involved with, or at-risk of involvement with, the juvenile justice system.

The purpose of this meeting is to offer parents information about the juvenile justice system, to give parents an opportunity to speak about their experiences with these two agencies, and to suggest ways to improve the experiences of families in urban communities who are involved with the juvenile justice system.

For more information about PEETA call Sincilina Beckett, Project Coordinator, at 203-641-8667.

### **Important Housing Alert from Statewide Legal Services**

Just as there were cuts to the cash assistance programs in the State of Connecticut several years ago, now there have been cuts to the Section 8 voucher program nationwide. Some housing authorities may not have enough money to continue funding every current Section 8 voucher at current levels. Section 8 administrators, including the housing authorities, are discussing ways to stretch Section 8 funds. Terminating assistance of some current voucher holders is one way the administrators can stretch Section 8 funds.

#### **WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF?**

- Know and comply with all your responsibilities as a Section 8 participant
- If you are not sure of all your responsibilities, read your Section 8 handout or handbook. If you do not have one, contact your Section 8 administrator to ask for one. It's best to write and keep a copy of your letter.
- Your responsibilities include but are not limited to:
  - Report all income changes for anyone in the household as soon as possible when they happen. This includes both increases and decreases in income. Report them in writing, not just a phone call, if you can. Keep a copy.
  - Report promptly when someone moves in or out of your household. Again, do this in writing, if you can. Keep a copy.
  - Do not move into a new apartment until Section 8 has inspected and approved the new place.
  - Show up on time for your recertification. Be sure to have *ALL* the paper work that is requested by your Section 8 worker. If an inspection of your apartment is scheduled, be sure you are there on time for the appointment to let the inspector in, or that you call to reschedule beforehand.
  - Comply with your responsibilities in your lease with your landlord.

Following all the Section 8 rules will not guarantee that you keep all your voucher benefits. However, you will be doing everything you can to keep this valuable benefit. Before you can be terminated, you have a right to a hearing.

**NOTE: If you are threatened with termination or have any other problem using your voucher, call Statewide Legal Services at 1-800-453-3320 immediately.**

## **Celebrate with Communitas**

The Manchester Community College Institute on Disability and Community Inclusion and Communitas invite all supporters of community inclusion to join with them in celebration “to honor those who have gone before us in the struggle and celebrate and honor each of you – each of us – who are still on the journey of life”. The event will take place on Sunday, May 15 from 12 noon to 4:00 pm. There will be no agenda and nothing to solve – it is suggested that folks bring a small dessert to share, and if they wish to bring a special memento to be placed in an “honoring” area in remembrance of a friend or relative. Attendees will have an opportunity to share thoughts about loved ones who are no longer with us. For more information contact Bev Jackson at 860-512-2789 or bevjackson@aol.com .

## **Elementary School Disability Awareness Program**

Disability Awareness presentations generally focus on teaching children what it is like to have a particular disability, rather than using approaches that teach children that disability is, as the Developmental Disabilities Act states, “a natural part of the human experience”.

The University of Connecticut Center on Disabilities recently received funding from the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities for development of an elementary school disability awareness program. The project is being piloted in grades one, two and three in a Bridgeport after-school system. Presentations and a children’s book entitled “*Sassy Goes To Work: A Dog with a Very Important Job*” provide children with a foundation to develop acceptance and tolerance of peoples’ differences, the opportunity to ask questions and build a framework that will continue into adulthood.

The benefits that this project could bring to children is a model of disability awareness that can increase the opportunities for people with disabilities to be welcomed and important members of their communities. By teaching children at a young age, and building acceptance of differences, the impact of the project can carry on throughout a child’s lifetime.

For more information, please contact the program coordinator Therese Nadeau at the University of Connecticut Center on Disabilities in Farmington, where she works with her service dog Sassy (860-679-1591).



## **Mammogram Initiative**

As reported in the April issue of The Bulletin, Qualidigm, a non-profit healthcare quality improvement organization, is collaborating with the Connecticut Women and Disability Network (CWDN) to learn more about what women with disabilities think about breast cancer screening. The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation is providing funding for the project.

Although the focus group part of the initiative has concluded, anyone who would like to share personal experiences may contact Qualidigm at 860-632-6335. They are especially interested in talking with women who have never had a mammogram.

### **Worried About a Loved One With Memory Loss? The Caregiver Help Study May be for You**

[UCONN Broadcast Message April 28, 2005]

If you are African American, Caribbean American, Latino or Hispanic, and you feel worried or uncertain about a loved one with memory loss, you may be interested in joining the Caregiver Help Study. All volunteers joining the Caregiver Help Study receive educational pamphlets and brochures about memory loss, stress-relieving tips for family caregivers, and lists of local community resources. Volunteers randomized to the intervention group also receive individualized education and counseling, designed to teach family caregivers important skills to take better care of their relatives, take better care of themselves, and access community resources. There is no cost for the educational materials or the individualized counseling during the 12-month study period. If you would like to talk with someone about the Caregiver Help Study, please call Nitza M. Diaz at the Center on Aging, University of Connecticut Health Center, at (860) 679-1359.

### **State Respite Care Program for Individuals with Alzheimer's Disease**

The State respite care program for people with Alzheimer's disease offers payment of up to \$3,500 to purchase respite services for the individual with Alzheimer's or the option of having an assessment of the services needed by the caregiver by developing a short term care plan. For more information about the application's criteria, including income guidelines, call 1-800-994-9422 or call the Alzheimer's Association, Connecticut Chapter at 1-888-3-MEMORY.

### **Social Role Valorization Training**

The Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities and the Social Role Valorization (SRV) Implementation Project in Worcester, Massachusetts, are pleased to announce a training event entitled "The Use of Restraints as a Human Service Technique." It will be held on Wednesday, May 25, 2005 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Institute of Technical and Business Development, Central Connecticut State University, 185 Main

Street, New Britain. There is no charge for the event, and the registration deadline is May 11, 2005.

The workshop presenter will be Marc Tumeinski, Training Coordinator of the SRV Implementation Project. Advanced registration is required. Send your name, agency affiliation (if any), address, telephone and e-mail (if any) to: CT Council on Developmental Disabilities - 460 Capitol Avenue - Hartford, CT 06106-1308. With your registration, please let the Council know if you will need sign language interpreters, taped materials, dietary foods or other accommodations. For further information contact: Ed Preneta (860) 418-6157 or ed.preneta@po.state.ct.us .

### **Asset-Based Community Development Workshop**

John McKnight, Professor of Education and Social Policy and Co-Director of the Asset-Based Community Development Institute at Northwestern University, will present a workshop on community building at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, May 23, 2005 at the Farmington Public Library, 6 Monteith Drive, Farmington. The workshop is co-sponsored by the Farmington Village Green and Library Association (FVGLA) and the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities.

The Asset-Based Community Development Institute (ABCD) is built upon three decades of community development research by John Kretzmann and John McKnight. Theories based on nationwide data gathered from over 100 neighborhoods in 20 cities on the community development potential of local assets such as schools, churches and parks, were refined and published in the book *Building Communities from the Inside Out*.

Mr. McKnight is returning to Connecticut to provide technical assistance on the Council's current initiative on community building with FAVARH in Canton. Mr. McKnight's workshop at the Farmington Public Library will be on his broader work in asset-based community development. The workshop is free and open to the public but seating is limited. Call to register (860) 673-6791.

### **People First Theme Sought**

People First is asking for input on a theme for the next state conference to be held on Saturday, October 22nd at the Bristol Clarion. If you have ideas please send them to Jeanne Magi or Jean Bowen at <advozealot@aol.com> before May 13th. If you have ideas for speakers please suggest these as well. People First will be having elections this year for officers and expect a busy next few months preparing for the Self Determination conference scheduled for June 3-4.

### **BRS Wants to Hear from You!**

The State Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) has been hosting public meetings for consumers, family members, advocates, service providers, and other interested parties to discuss BRS policies and programs. One public meeting remains to be held and will take place on Wednesday, May 4 at Goodwill Industries, 165 Ocean Terrace, Bridgeport. The meeting will run from 3:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Persons who are unable to attend the public meeting may provide written comments by e-mail to Evelyn Oliver Knight at [evelyn.knight@po.state.ct.us](mailto:evelyn.knight@po.state.ct.us), or by fax to 860-424-4850 to Ms. Knight's attention by May 12, 2005.

### **Do You Have a Memorable Teacher?**

"I was recently asked this question by a couple of women who are doing a project about teachers who have made a difference in people's lives--not just academic teachers, but anyone who has taught us a memorable lesson. I responded with this:

One of the most influential teachers I have ever had is my younger sister, Becky Abbot. Becky was born with mental retardation, and for much of her childhood was institutionalized, in foster care, or in group homes. Her early life was not easy, and she underwent many experiences I can't even imagine. But somehow, she has managed to keep her faith that people are good, that everyone she meets is a potential friend, and that there is pure joy everywhere you look, in every experience you have--even the bad ones. She now lives independently, works a regular job, and has an infinitely better social life than I do.

I'm the kind of person who likes to dwell on what-ifs and should-have-beens, and I like to beat myself up over the past. Becky just says, "Oh, my sister Sue, you're so funny!," laughs her infectious laugh, and shows me just how rewarding living in the moment can be. She teaches me to trust in people, and in life. She teaches me that whatever happens is what's meant to happen; it's up to you to figure out the lesson in the experience and then move on. Or not figure it out and move on anyway. She teaches me that the true test of a person is not in their intellect, or social status, or any of that horse pockey--it's in how you touch other people as you dance through life. And how you let them touch you. And, of course, that bowling is the ultimate in fun, even if I stink at it."

Sue Abbot Pelletier  
(daughter of Quincy Abbot)

### **National Council on Disability Seeks Americans with Disabilities Act Impact Testimony**

The National Council on Disability (NCD) is collecting written testimony from people with disabilities, their families, and their advocates on the impact the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 has had on their lives.

NCD is an independent federal agency charged with making recommendations to the

President and Congress to enhance the quality of life for all Americans with disabilities and their families. Testimony is sought regarding the extent to which the ADA has achieved its goals of equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for people with disabilities. The information received will be added to a body of data currently being assembled from a variety of sources to be analyzed and transmitted to the President and Congress in a report to be published in fall 2005.

Testimony is sought regarding:

Telecommunications: Has the ADA had an impact on the ability of people who have hearing and/or speech impairments to communicate by telephone?

Employment: Has the ADA improved employment opportunities and job retention for people with disabilities?

Public Services: Are goods and services provided by local and state agencies more accessible to people with disabilities because of the ADA?

Public Accommodations Operated by Private Entities: Are goods and services provided by businesses more accessible to people with disabilities because of the ADA?

Please send written comments on or before May 15, 2005, to Julie Carroll, National Council on Disability, 1331 F Street, NW, Suite 850, Washington, DC 20004 or [jcarroll@ncd.gov](mailto:jcarroll@ncd.gov).

For more information, contact Mark Quigley or Julie Carroll at 202-272-2004.

## **National American with Disabilities Act Symposium**

[Disability Law Resource Project [dlrp@ilru.org](mailto:dlrp@ilru.org)), April 26, 2005]

The Disability Law Resource Project at ILRU has announced that a National ADA symposium and EXPO will be held on May 17-19 at the Overland Park Convention Center in Overland Park, Kansas. It is the most comprehensive conference available on the ADA and disability-related issues. This premier event offers:

- A session schedule offering over 56 workshops on a wide range of topics that can be customized to meet your individual needs and interests.
- Nationally recognized presenters who are key representatives from the agencies involved with the ADA including the U.S. Department of Justice, the EEOC and the U.S. Access Board.
- Dynamic, interactive training in a relaxed environment that emphasizes networking and group problem-solving.
- Keynote Speaker, Randy Snow, Paralympic medalist and inductee into the Olympic Hall of Fame, and
- An EXPO Hall filled with the latest disability-related products and services available.

For more information visit: [www.adaproject.org/symposium.html](http://www.adaproject.org/symposium.html).

## **Senator Harkins Comments on President's Social Security Plans**

"Social Security is in danger," Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa said during a 90-minute forum April 24 at the Grant Wood Area Education Agency in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. "It's not in danger of running out of money. . . . it's in danger of us privatizing it." Harkin has been perhaps the strongest advocate of disability rights and services in Washington over the last ten years.

Harkin argued that Social Security will pay out 100 percent of benefits until at least 2041. He said the cost of privatizing the system would reach \$4.9 trillion during the first 20 years, which would undermine Social Security by increasing the federal budget deficit.

Harkin said Bush's privatization plan would allow individuals to invest two-thirds of their Social Security contribution, but those returns could not make up the benefit cuts and "would be subject to the whims of Wall Street."

## **Concern Expressed about Possible Changes in Social Security**

[Justice for All Moderator" [jfa@ifanow.org](mailto:jfa@ifanow.org). April 23, 2005]

"The National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) values both social insurance as well as savings and investments as successful tools to plan and contribute to an inclusionary life. NCIL believes strongly that social insurance, in contrast to private saving and investment, is a distinct and separate mechanism for the common goals of independent and productive living in one's community.

NCIL estimates from the private account literature to date that the men, women and children of at least 10,000,000 American families would be adversely affected by reductions in benefits caused by introducing private accounts into social insurance. Over a third of the benefits paid go to 17 million non-retirees. These include disabled workers and their dependents, and spouses and children of workers who are retired or deceased. Of particular concern are:

- Children, who make up 8% of beneficiaries
- Disabled workers, who make up 12% of beneficiaries
- Women, who receive benefits as retirees, disabled workers, spouses and widows.

About 44% of non-married elderly women rely on Social Security for 90% or more of their income. For African American women the figure is much higher, at 74%. These non-retirees might suffer the most under the principal privatization scheme proposed by the President's Social Security Commission. The plan would offset the traditional benefits of retirees based on the assets in their private accounts and then apply a reduction that is unrelated to the private accounts to all traditional benefits - including those of non-retirees, who will have no private accounts to access or will have accounts with very little assets."

## **And More on Social Security**

News from United Cerebral Palsy: In a televised press conference last week, President Bush outlined parts of his plan for changes to Social Security. His remarks made distinctions between treatment of seniors and treatment of people with disabilities. He stated: "As we fix Social Security, some things won't change: seniors and people with disabilities will get their checks; all Americans born before 1950 will receive the full benefits." There is an important distinction here. He did not say that people with disabilities will receive their full benefits (as he did for seniors); he only stated that people with disabilities will get their checks.

## **Judicial Nominee Raises Concerns**

When President George H. W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990, he said this landmark law would enable everyone with a disability to "pass through once-closed doors into a bright new era of equality, independence and freedom."

Yet by nominating Judge Terrence W. Boyle to serve on the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, the current President Bush threatens to shatter the legacy his father established 15 years ago, according to ADA Watch President Jim Ward.

Ward notes that slowly but steadily, the ADA is helping to remove the obstacles - both physical and attitudinal - that have denied people with disabilities access to the American dream. But the progress created will be severely undermined unless the Senate rejects Judge Boyle's nomination. Although the former President Bush hailed the ADA as a "basic civil rights" law, Judge Boyle holds a very different view.

In a 1997 decision, Judge Boyle, who was appointed by President Ronald Reagan in 1984, criticized the ADA as a law that "seeks to single out the disabled for special, advantageous treatment." He also has permitted state officials to use the doctrine of states' rights to avoid complying with the ADA. This states' rights interpretation was later overruled by the Supreme Court.

"With the odds already stacked against people with disabilities, confirming someone such as Judge Boyle to the nation's second-highest level of courts would make a bad situation even worse" Ward says. "Under the ADA, millions of people with disabilities have entered the public square and are making meaningful contributions in their communities and workplaces. Judges who deride this progress by pointing to 'advantageous' treatment are forgetting what makes America great - our nation's willingness to remove barriers and extend opportunity to all."

Visit the ADA Watch Website for updates on court appointments: [www.adawatch.org](http://www.adawatch.org)

## **Paul Longmore Takes a Look at Oregon's Assisted Suicide Law**

Paul Longmore is a disability advocate, professor of history and Director of the Institute on Disability at San Francisco State University. Here is his review of a proposed assisted suicide law for California and how the implementation of the assisted suicide law in Oregon is going.

”Contrary to the assertions of proponents of assisted suicide ... that the Oregon law it models have strong safeguards, both have dangerous major defects. Most glaring, though the law requires doctors to document lethal prescriptions thoroughly, it sets no penalties for failing to report. The Oregon Legislature did not give the Department of Human Services (DHS) regulatory authority or the resources to detect violations. DHS does not regularly interview doctors who refused to assist the patients to die. So most of that mountain of data that ...has been used to justify their position comes from the doctors who write the death-causing prescriptions.

Talk about skewing the results! While DHS reports allegedly show the law's success, the privacy provision makes it difficult for data to go deeper. DHS admitted in its first report that it could not determine whether the practice of physician-assisted suicide was complying with or violating the law.

Problems with the law's implementation came to light only because the Oregon press interviewed relatives of some deceased patients. Last month, The Oregonian, noted: "Oregon's Death with Dignity Act does not give them the necessary authority to investigate individual assisted suicides" and that the law's reporting system "seems rigged to avoid finding" answers to questions about the practice. The promise that legalization would bring assisted suicide into the open, regulate it and make doctors accountable has led instead to physician-assisted suicide practiced in secret and without oversight.

Advocates also assert that Oregon's law has vastly improved pain control. But a Journal of Palliative Medicine study reported that pain relief for dying Oregonians has deteriorated. Dying patients in 2000-02 were nearly twice as likely to be described as suffering moderate or severe pain during the last week of life as in 1996-97. The researchers noted that Medicare and Medicaid budget cuts might be involved, declaring: "The negative impact of overstretching nursing resources on pain management should not be underestimated." Since 37 percent of Oregonians who took the lethal medications depended on those programs, we must ask if poor pain management prodded them to end their lives.”

## **The 2005 White House Conference on Aging**

A White House Conference on Aging is held every ten years with the goal of making aging policy recommendations to the President and Congress, and to assist the public and

private sectors in promoting dignity, health, independence and economic security of current and future generations of older persons. This year the conference will be held in Washington, D.C. from October 23-26.

The 2005 White House Conference on Aging occurs as the first wave of the baby boom generation prepares for retirement, creating an important opportunity to creatively assess aging in America and improve the lives of older Americans. Go to their website for more information: [www.whcoa.gov/](http://www.whcoa.gov/) .

### **Paralyzed Veterans of America Newsletter**

The Paralyzed Veterans of America Newsletter dated April 21, 2005 includes the history of the PVA movement since World War II. Go to [newsletter@pva.org](mailto:newsletter@pva.org) to get a copy.

**Please relay this Bulletin to your membership including those who do not have e-mail access. Make this available in large print, tape and for others who have difficulty accessing information. Suggest your membership go to the library and go onto [www.kleinmanconsulting.com](http://www.kleinmanconsulting.com) to view or print a copy. If you would like to see previous issues of the Bulletin, read about the background of the Collaborative or if you would like to be added to the mailing list, you may also go to [www.KleinmanConsulting.com](http://www.KleinmanConsulting.com).**

**How can you find your federal Representatives and Senators? Go to [www.congress.org](http://www.congress.org) and find the box under the heading “Write Elected Officials.” Type in your Zip code and press the “Enter” key. Then, when the names of your elected officials come on the screen, click on the word “Info” under the name of the elected official you want to contact. The telephone number will be listed on the page that comes up next. To find your CT representatives call the Capitol Switchboard at 1-888-818-6641, visit [cga.ct.gov/](http://cga.ct.gov/) (note—this is a new website address) or enter your ZIP code at [www.congress.org](http://www.congress.org).**