



Florida Self-Advocates Network'D (FL SAND)

Representing 14 grassroots self-advocacy groups in Florida

2018 Legislative Priorities



As legislators we know you care about improving economic opportunity for all Floridians. Yet, there is one group of workers providing a vital service in the community that has gone without an effective raise in their wages for more than a decade. They are the individuals who provide direct care services to Floridians with disabilities.

The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council and FL SAND have been working on increasing iBudget waiver provider compensation for some time; and

while some progress has been made, long-term, systems change to increase direct care provider service rates and reimbursement is critical. Direct care work is quickly becoming transient employment, resulting in extremely high turnover, decreasing quality of care, and a shortage of workers.

Florida families and providers must be able to recruit and retain dedicated people to provide for the direct care needs of persons with developmental disabilities so that they can continue to live independently, avoiding the costly burden on taxpayers when forced to live in institutional settings.

HELP US WORK!

One can't run into too many people with disabilities without hearing the same story — over and over. They want to work and have the abilities to earn good pay but cannot afford to work if they have significant health or personal care needs because they will lose Medicaid. Most often, insurance offered by their employers will not cover their significant needs or personal care.

Forty-seven states have innovative programs that improve the ability for an individual with a developmental disability to work and pay income taxes, keep vital health coverage, and lower their dependence on government assistance. These programs are a win for everyone involved.

We urge the legislature to support new legislation that proposes a program that will allow individuals with disabilities to make more than \$25,000 a year without losing essential services and therapies that allow them to work and contribute to the workforce.

TRANSPORTATION EQUALITY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Most Floridians take transportation for granted. Getting to work, dinner out with friends, doctors' appointments, are no big deal. But for many people with disabilities, getting to work and the doctor requires planning, waiting, expense, and considerable disruption to their lives.

Barriers to local and specialized transportation services for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities was at the forefront for the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council,

FL SAND, and other advocates during the 2017 legislative session. Transportation Issues addressed with the legislature included affordability, safety, inability to cross county lines, and long travel times. This advocacy resulted in a legislated Transportation Task Force that made recommendations for solutions in December 2017.

FL SAND urges the Florida Legislature to provide resources and explore innovative approaches for transportation for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities that were recommended by the Transportation Task Force in December 2017.

I AM YOUR CONSTITUENT, AND
MY VOICE MATTERS!



FL SAND is a network of 14 grassroots self-advocacy groups that represent people with disabilities throughout Florida. We advocate for disability rights and inclusion for all.

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