

# Enabled Voices



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## Hundreds of Proposed Bills Afloat in Sacramento

### *Many of Concern to People with Disabilities*



The California State Legislature is getting up to speed with its 2007 business. Currently there are hundreds of proposed bills --many of which may be of concern to people living with disabilities. Following are some of them:

#### *Signature Stamps in Place of Signature*

**AB (Assembly Bill) 18**, introduced by Assembly Member, Sam Blakeslee, would allow individuals with a physical disability to use a signature stamp for their signature on a document or writing any time that signature is required by law. The stamp mark would have to be treated like a signature by a government entity or others, but the person using the stamp would also need to provide a photo ID at the time of its use.

#### *Medi-Cal Eligibility Increase*

**AB 55**, introduced by Assembly Member, Marvyn Dymally, would increase eligibility for the State's Medi-Cal program, under which low-income residents receive medical services. Currently, a person's income has to be equal to 100% of the Federal poverty level to qualify and this bill would increase that level to 133% (or \$13,579 a year for 1 person and \$26,561 a year for a family of 4).

#### *IHSS Standard Training Requirements*

**AB 182**, introduced by Assembly Member Fiona Ma, would mandate standardized training for In-Home Support Service (IHSS) worker training. It

would also seek input from counties and other groups as to the content of the curriculum.

#### *IHSS Worker Duties--Reading Services*

**AB 238**, introduced by Assembly Member Jim Beall, would provide reading services to IHSS recipients who are blind, have low vision, or have another disability that affects the ability to read. Currently reading services are not covered under IHSS hours, which means care providers can't be paid for this task.

#### *IHSS Worker Criminal Check Requirement*

**AB 459**, introduced by Assembly Member Paul Cook, would require criminal background checks for potential IHSS workers. It would also allow the Public Authority or other organization investigating the worker to pass on costs for the criminal check to that potential employee or to the recipient of the IHSS workers' services.

Emergency preparedness is a hot topic these days, particularly due to such recent events as the Hurricane Katrina disaster. The New Orleans event alone indicated that government officials at all levels--alarmingly--may not have effective (or any) plans for assisting people with disabilities in the event of a disaster. There are a few proposed bills that relate to this issue, including:

#### *Tsunami Emergency Plans*

**AB 319**, introduced by Assembly Member

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Pedro Nava, would establish a California Tsunami Steering Committee to guide tsunami preparation activities and would require coastal communities to participate and develop evacuation routes and maps. It also requires that committee to identify “special needs” populations in those areas, including individuals with disabilities and elderly patients.

### Emergency Services Position for Disabled

**SB (Senate Bill) 426**, introduced by Senator Christine Kehoe, relates to a change in the Government Code for emergency services. It would create the position of Deputy Director for Access & Functional Needs Coordination within the Office of Emergency Services. This person would be responsible for creating an emergency plan to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities.

For more information on any of these proposed bills, contact us at **TCIL (707-445-8404)**. You can



**IMPORTANT  
DATES**

**TCIL: (707)  
445-8404**

**March**--Time to build support for (or opposition to) proposed bills.

**May 23**--4th Disability Capitol Action Day, Sacramento

also take advantage of our new Advocacy Center at 955 Myrtle Avenue to go on the Web and check on legislation for yourself, send emails, to legislators, or write letters. We can assist you with any of these activities. If you're able to contact your legislators on your own and urge them to support or oppose these or other bills, following is contact information:



**Your Elected  
Officials**

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