

An Important Anniversary in Disability Rights Movement

April 5. This is a pivotal date in the disability rights movement and 2007 marks the 30th anniversary of what happened on that day. Many compare the event's significance to that of Selma for African-Americans and civil rights.

April 5, 1977 was the day that demonstrations began throughout the nation to demand the signing of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This was the first specific statement in a federal statute to address the civil rights of people with disabilities. It states that:

"...no qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall be excluded from, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that either receives Federal financial assistance or is conducted by any Executive agency or the United States Postal Service."

Yes...it took FOUR YEARS for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) to actually implement this regulation. This is because there was resistance to the new law from various positions of power in Washington, DC, resulting in one delaying tactic after another, from the Nixon Administration and through the Ford and Carter Administrations. Finally, individuals in the disability community had had enough and employed the "power of the people," to pressure then Secretary of HEW, Joseph Califano, to sign the bill on April 28, 1977.

However, it took nonviolent, but determined demonstrations in Boston, Washington DC, New

York, San Francisco and other cities by thousands of individuals with disabilities to achieve this landmark signing. In fact, about 150, disabled people occupied the HEW office in San Francisco for over three weeks demanding that the law be signed. These gutsy individuals endured difficult conditions in a non-accessible facility. Federal government officials even had the hot water shut off to try and get them to leave.

However, they persisted in their fight for disability rights and won.

April 5. A good reminder of how individual and group action can empower you to make change!!

Spring Brings More Bills

Spring has officially arrived and proposed bills continue to sprout in Sacramento. Following are several more that are pertinent to people with disabilities in California:

Senate Bill 633 (introduced by Senator Alquist) declares the State's commitment to providing services to people with disabilities in the most integrated setting, including expansion of the Linkages and Multipurpose Senior Services Programs.

Assembly Bill 615 (Assembly Member Torrico) would require a biennial report by the CA Emergency Council on emergency preparedness to include information relative to

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955 MYRTLE AVENUE
EUREKA, CALIFORNIA 95501



vulnerable populations, including the elderly and disabled.

Assembly Bill 749 (Assembly Member Berg) would prohibit a residential care facility for the elderly from admitting or retaining a person who is bedridden if that person is receiving hospice care.

Assembly Bill 853 (Assembly Member Jones) provides for the enactment of the Home Care Services Act of 2007 that provides for the licensure and regulation of home care organizations.

Assembly Bill 1113 (Assembly Member Brownley) would extend the expansion of Medi-Cal eligibility.

Assembly Bill 1434 (Assembly Member Dymally) would require a ratesetting system for Medi-Cal that would reflect the costs and services associated with quality home health agency services.

Assembly Bill 1531 (Assembly Member DeSaulnier) would increase penalties for unauthorized use of disabled parking spaces, while also limiting the number of times a

person can renew a temporary disability placard to 2.

If you would like more information on any of these bills or others mentioned in previous issues of this publication, contact TCIL. Also be sure to call your legislators and let them know your feelings on this proposed legislation.

Senator Pat Wiggins, (916) 651-4002 or (707) 445-6508

Senator Sam Aanestad, (530) 470-1846 or (916) 651-4004

Assembly Member Patty Berg, (707) 576-2526 or (916) 319-2001

Disability Capitol Action Day!!

Sacramento May 23, 2007

Contact TCIL at (707) 445-8404 for more information or if you'd like to attend this event.



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