

The ECVN DECLARATION

Volume 6, Issue 1

Winter, 2012

- Empowering People to Live Independently -

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From the Editor



Being near the nation's capital gives ECVN the ability to advocate where advocacy makes a difference! While advocating at events of national import is part of what ECVN does, another part is advocating on behalf of Virginians with Disabilities.

ECVN will be doing that on Feb. 8, 2012 and we invite you to take part as well. By joining us in Richmond or contacting your representatives some other way, you help us all!

We hope you get some good info about contacting your representatives from this newsletter. For info about joining us at the VA General Assembly or general info about contacting your representatives, contact Doris at ECVN.



Tony Trott

2012 Virginia General Assembly Session

Governor Robert McDonnell presented his proposed Budget for the next two Fiscal Years in December. Delegations of Virginia Senators and Delegates from various locales held hearings and forums in the first month of this year to get your input on changes that need to be made to the Governor's proposed Budget. ECVN hopes you were able to attend one of the events to tell your legislators what is important to you and to advocate for all people with disabilities.

In case you weren't able to attend one of the hearings, there is still time to contact your representatives in Richmond! If you're not sure who represents your locale, you can use the Who's My Legislator tool on the Virginia General Assembly website (<http://legis.virginia.gov>). You really must contact the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Health and Human Resources Subcommittees right away because they will be making decisions about the proposed state budget for the next two years, including what stays in and what doesn't, between now and February 17. On February 19, the Health & Human Resources (HHR) subcommittee will report out to the full Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees, which will then report their budget recommendations for action by their respective chambers during the next week.

What follows are the 2012 Legislative Priorities as laid out by the Virginia Association of Centers for Independent Living (VACIL):

(1) Stabilize funding for independent living services. The budget for 2012 reduces funding for core independent

living services by 7.5% or over \$306,000 provided by Centers for Independent Living (CILs). The Governor's proposed budget further reduces funding for these services by over \$87,000! The reductions will result in fewer independent living services to people who are trying to stay out of nursing facilities and other institutions. Services provided by CILs are important and an additional \$394,619 is needed to restore funding at the FY09 funding level.

(2) Reduce waiting lists for the Medicaid Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver and Intellectual Disabilities (ID) Waiver. The DD Waiver provides services for, among others, people with autism which is according to various nonprofit agencies, the "fastest-growing serious developmental disability in the U.S." We must decrease the number of people on waiting lists for these two Waivers by increasing funding and opening more slots.

(3) Maintain current monthly income limits for Medicaid Waiver eligibility. Right now, the monthly income limit to receive Waiver services is over \$2,000 and the Gov's proposed budget would reduce that limit to under \$1750. This would make fewer people eligible for Waiver services and therefore, unless they can pay out-of-pocket for required services, place them at much greater risk for institutionalization.

(4) Maintain personal care services available through the Elderly or Disabled with Consumer Direction

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LEND News



Loudoun ENDependence (LEND, an ECVN Satellite) plans to have a fundraiser called a Million Coin Challenge. Funds raised help us assist people with disabilities in Loudoun County achieve their independent living goals. With your help we will be able to achieve our Goal to collect one million coins. Watch in upcoming ECVN Monthly Calendars for ways to participate.

LEND made presentations at the Loudoun Legislators Public Hearing on Jan. 4th and the Town Hall Meeting hosted by Delegate LeMunyon on Jan. 7th. We thank them for the opportunity to bring some disability issues to them. They look forward to hearing from other consumers.

ECNV 30 Years Old

It seems like just last week that we celebrated our 25th Anniversary. These last five years have flown by and the older I get the faster the years fly. Five years ago we still resided at 3100 Clarendon Blvd., a great location, but a rent increase made it a lot less attractive.

In 2012 we will be celebrating our 30th Anniversary. We've begun planning for three separate events over the course of this year. The present plans entail a Founders Reception/Open House in April, a 5K or 10K race this summer, and in the fall we are planning for a 30th Anniversary Gala celebration.

We enter our 30th year expanding programs and providing increased services to people with disabilities. Recently ECVN qualified to become an Employment Network and will be providing support services in getting people with dis-

David Burds
Ex. Director



abilities into the workforce. We have also redoubled our efforts with the Money Follows the Person (MFP) program to assist those who wish to move from institutions into the community. We have just completed a two year demonstration grant to provide Travel Training (bus and rail) to people with disabilities. It's a valuable program that we are actively seeking funding to continue and we believe we have been successful in acquiring it. Go to www.ecnv.org to learn about the Travel Training program and other programs and services.

As we hold events this year, please join us. As we continue our mission of empowering others with disabilities, be our support in whatever means possible.

A Happy New Year to all.

2012 Virginia General Assembly Session

Continued from Page 1 **(EDCD) Waiver.**

Last year, the General Assembly placed a 56-hour per week cap on personal care services. The proposed budget reduces that cap to 48 hours.

(5) Reinstate funding for the Consumer Services Fund to enable Virginians with disabilities, who are eligible, to attain Assistive Technology.

Members of the Senate Finance HHR Subcommittee are Emmett Hanger (R-

24), Janet Howell (D-32), John Watkins (R-10), Yvonne Miller (D-5), Henry Marsh III (D-16), Ryan McDougale (R-4), and Jill Holtzman Vogel (R-27).

Of note, are Hanger (as he is the Chairman and he is sponsoring an IL Budget Amendment), Howell (as she represents Arlington and Fairfax), Vogel (as she represents part of Loudoun). Richard Saslaw (D-35) is also a good contact as he is on the full Finance Cmte. and he is the Senate leader on the Democrat side.

Members of the House Appropriations HHR Subcommittee are: Riley Ingram (R-62), Steven Landes (R-25), Chris Jones (R-26), John O'Bannon, III (R-73), Robert Brink (D-48), Onzlee Ware (D-11), and Rosalyn Dance (D-63).

Of note are Ingram (as he is the Chairman) and Brink (as he represents Arlington and Fairfax). Del. Brink is also sponsoring an IL Amendment so ECVN encourages thanking him for that.



2012 Board Members (l-r): Cindy Daniel, Steve Yaffe, Elizabeth Leef, Lee Jones, Marcie Goldstein (President), Michel Bagbonon (Treasurer), Matthew Barkley (1st Vice President)

Not pictured: Jessica Hunt (2nd Vice President), Erica Midboe (Secretary), Tapan Banerjee, Lenore Levin, Tony Schaffer, Tony Young (Board Member Emeritus)

The NewWell Fund

There are likely some Virginians with disabilities who could use a low-interest loan for assistive technology. Fortunately, there's a program that provides them!

The NewWell Fund is a low-interest loan program that assists Virginians with disabilities to get the assistive technology they need; they also provide Telework loans for individuals working from home who need equipment for their business. Loans can be made to the person with a disability or to a family member.

While not an entitlement (meaning, not every eligible applicant will be able to get a loan), when the NewWell Fund reviews a case, credit issues related to one's disability are overlooked and that can be a very big deal.



It means that if you had defaulted on a loan because of a disability, that would not be counted against you. NewWell loans may be used for home modifications, automobiles, Durable Medical Equipment (for example, a new wheelchair), and other types of technology that can be used to overcome some aspect of a disability (for example, hearing or vision aids, augmentative communication devices, prosthetics, et al.).

If this program sounds like something you might benefit from, ECVN encourages you to contact the NewWell Fund.

NewWell Fund

1602 Rolling Hills Drive, Suite 107
Richmond, VA 23229
Tel: (804) 662-9000 or (866) 835-5976
Fax: (804) 662-9533
E-Mail: atfa@atfa.org

Writing to Legislators

The advocacy season is upon us and we realize that writing a letter to let your needs be known takes time and for some it can be intimidating; so here are five points to your letter, you can call us and we'll be glad to discuss this.

1. Start with an **"INTRO"** - Talk about yourself as a caregiver, family member of a person with a disability, person with a disability, and/or advocate and let the person know who you are.

2. **TELL A STORY** - Why are you writing (and be specific): to stop cuts, to ask them to pass a certain bill, to add more services, etc. Try to find the exact language, exact bill or proposed action and use it in your letter.

3. **IMPACT** - Remind them of the impact their decision/proposed cut or other behavior will mean for your life or the life of someone you care about.

4. **THANK YOU** - Close with a thank you for taking the time to read your letter and for their service.

5. **SIGNATURE** - Don't forget your name and address!

Remember, always try to stay under one page. Lot's of people may be writing and the readers time is limited. While there may be a lot of people concerned about the issues, **NO ONE** can tell your story better than you. Always send your letter through at least two of the following means: fax, e-mail, phone call, snail mail. Many offices have a public comment line so create a shorter version of your letter, simply read it over the phone to be recorded on the comment line.

Now that you are fully equipped to advocate, please get out there and let them hear your voice, it really does make a difference!

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HOT TOPICS

Virginia Medicaid
Waivers Workshop by
ECNV

**MEDICAID WAIVERS
WORKSHOP**

**February 2, 2012
10 AM – 12 PM
Eligibility & Services**

The workshop will be held at 2100 Washington Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22204 (Arlington County Human Services Building, Sequoia Auditorium—lower level).

The workshop is free and will be presented by ECVN.

Contact Hannah Manila at ECVN to register or for more information.

**Go Paperless! More Updates!
Email Us at info@ecnv.org!**

ECNV Membership Application/Renewal

Be a part of a dynamic, leading, community-based organization this year. As an ECVN member, you also have an opportunity to vote in the annual election of your representatives on the ECVN Board of Directors.

As a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, all ECVN donation/membership fees and contributions are **tax deductible** and are used to fund services in your community.

Name: _____ Home Phone: _____

Address: _____ Office Phone: _____

_____ E-mail Address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____

Donation/Membership Fee: () Individual \$15/year () Family \$25/year
() Associate (members under 18) \$5/year () Other \$ _____

Please mail check to: ECVN, 2300 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 305, Arlington, VA 22201

ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia, Inc. (ECNV) is a community-based resource and advocacy center managed by and for people with disabilities. ECVN promotes the independent living philosophy and equal access for all people with disabilities.