

June 16, 2008

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper  
513 Hart Building  
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Carper:

I write on behalf of the State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) to encourage you to support S.1050 which establishes standards for medical diagnostic equipment and programs for promoting good health, disease prevention, and wellness and for the prevention of secondary conditions for individuals with disabilities. Specifically, the bill requires the Architecture and Transportation Access Boards to develop standards for medical diagnostic equipment to make this equipment (e.g. exam tables, mammography) accessible to people with disabilities. In addition, it authorizes grants for wellness programs. These wellness programs are broadly defined and encompass smoking cessation, increasing physical activity and reducing obesity. Finally, it amends the Public Health Act to require Medical Schools and Dental Schools to include training in their curriculums that focuses on people with disabilities, including people with cognitive disabilities.

June Isaacson Kailes, associate director of the Center for Disability Issues and the Health Professions at the Western University of Health Sciences in Pomona, California states in the attached article that "For people with a variety of limitations, the old instructions to hop up, look here, read this, stay still, can be extremely difficult to impossible, which means people don't get the procedures done they need." Research shows that disabled women are less likely to get mammograms and Pap tests. Another study found that those who get breast cancer are less likely to receive standard treatments and are more likely to die. Kailes did a national survey and found that people with disabilities have trouble using X-ray machines, rehab equipment, scales and scanning devices, like MRIs. Often, people with disabilities are lifted by staff which results in being dropped, twisted and getting hurt. Moreover, it is undignified and humiliating.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions or comments regarding our observations on this most important matter.

Sincerely,

Daniese McMullin-Powell, Chair  
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

cc: Developmental Disabilities Council  
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens

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