New Advocacy Strategies for Changing Policies

April 27, 2020
*** REMINDER: LEND is NOT allowed to do any lobbying activities. ***

The following information is shared with you to assist in any educational activities you might do in the context of LEND, such as educating your legislator(s) on NDD-related issues. Any lobbying you do, including promotion of a specific bill or appropriation asks, must be done as an individual / private citizen, and communications need to come from your personal email address or contact.
Today’s Speakers

- **Elaine Linn**
  - Project Manager, Family Voices of California

- **Robyn Linscott**
  - Policy Fellow, U.S. Senator Kamala Harris

- **Adriana Ruelas**
  - Chief of Staff, Assemblymember James Ramos
Objectives

- Review previous seminars
- Get an “insider’s view” of Congress and the California Legislature
- Discuss current issues facing people with IDD
- Identify strategies for advocacy in a changing policymaking environment
Review

- Public Policy Advocacy for Systems Change (11/25/19)
  - Becoming an effective systems-level advocate
  - Disability history
  - Storytelling

- Family and Professional Partnerships in Advocacy (3/16/20)
  - Authentic family engagement
  - Impacting the legislative and budget processes
  - Chronic underfunding of services for people with NDD
New Challenges

DeVos Weighs Waivers for Special Education. Parents Are Worried.

The $2 trillion coronavirus law could give the education secretary the power to waive special education rules as school districts struggle to teach all their students online.

Coronavirus ravages services for people with disabilities, leaving many at risk

Feds Urged To Prevent COVID-19 Disability Discrimination

by Michelle Diament | April 24, 2020
Robyn Lynscott
Policy Fellow, U.S. Senator Kamala Harris

https://www.harris.senate.gov
Adriana Ruelas
Chief of Staff, Assemblymember James Ramos

https://a40.asmdc.org
http://www.legislature.ca.gov
Questions?
# This is a Critical Time

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<th>Conflicting situations</th>
<th>Necessity beckons</th>
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<th>A pivotal moment</th>
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<td>Shifting priorities</td>
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<td>Long term implications</td>
<td>Creativity reveals possibility</td>
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If not us, then who?
If not now, then when?

- John Lewis
former Freedom Rider
Changing Advocacy

- Don’t be afraid to contact decisionmakers!
  - Calls
  - Virtual meetings
  - Emails, letters, faxes
  - Ask for assistance & legislative updates

- Share your story
  - Prepare: Make it meaningful
  - Replace “likes” with action

- Weigh in
  - Activate, participate in committees
  - Engage with advocacy groups

- Follow up
Strategies for Everyone

3-5 hours
- Organize others around an issue
- Engage with an advocacy group or effort
- Develop a deeper knowledge of a policy/issue

1 hour
- Stay updated on policy activity
- Meet with decisionmakers (virtual/phone)
- Attend a hearing/meeting
- Provide comment
- Write a letter
- Engage with an advocacy group or effort

15-30 min
- Stay updated on policy activity
- Regularly communicate
- Ask for updates, help
- Engage with an advocacy group
- Enlist others as champs

1-5 min
- Respond to action alerts
- Send an email
- Copy the right people
- Make a call
- Social media
Get Information

Elected officials, legislation

- Project Vote Smart
  - votesmart.org

- U.S. Congress
  - Bills: govtrack.us
  - Members of Congress: congress.gov

- The California Legislature
  - Committees, Bills, Calendar, Legislators: legislature.ca.gov
  - Senators & Assemblymembers: findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov

Updates

- Family Voices of California: www.familyvoicesofca.org
- Family Voices (national): https://familyvoices.org
- CalMatters (non-profit news organization): https://calmatters.org
- Professional societies, school districts, health systems

Policies Affecting People with IDD

- The Arc CA: thearcca.org
- American Association of People with Disabilities: https://www.aapd.com
- Association of University Centers on Disabilities: https://www.aucd.org
- Disability Rights Education and Defense fund: https://dredf.org
- National Down Syndrome Congress: https://www.ndsccenter.org
- TASH: https://tash.org
Questions?
Thank you!

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