



**"We advocate because we believe.
We believe because we know there is a better "right" way.
We persevere because it's all we know.
-unknown**

Brain Injury Legislative Tracker Bulletin #1, January 23, 2010

Legislative Update

HB 1499- reducing the number of area agencies in the state.

Ellen Edgerly provided testimony on Thursday, January 20, 2010 in opposition to the bill on the behalf of the Brain Injury Association of New Hampshire. This is a bill that would consolidate all of the area agencies into 1 central location (Concord) and 1 director, with 3 satellite sites (one in the northern part of the state, 1 in the south western part, and another in the south eastern part of the state). The room was full and not one person provided support for this bill other than the sponsor.

The sponsor couldn't offer any research or ideas about how much this could save the state and the Department of Health and Human Services couldn't assess any financial impact. So even though it may or may not save any money for the State, it would certainly affect the access people have since their local Family Support councils and Boards of Directors would all be dismantled. **This bill will have an Executive Session on 1/26/10 at 1:00 pm LOB 205-207**

HB1599-FN establishing an emergency mental health and developmental disabilities database within the division of state police. STATUS: Committee Vote 16-1 (Killed)

HB 1664-FN making appropriations reductions in the operating budget for fiscal year 2011 and relative to state revenues and expenditures. On Tuesday the HOUSE FINANCE committee conducted a public hearing on HB 1664, which cuts \$76 million in state spending for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011.

The proposal includes deep cuts to both developmental and acquired brain injury services in 2011. Again, only the sponsors of the bill registered support for the legislation. HB 1664 is a plan by the House republicans who cite weak state revenues in the state's two-year budget and suggest the proposed cuts now as a way to avoid drastic steps in the future. State agencies department heads came out hard against the bill. CSNI registered opposition along with the cancer prevention program, the family resource centers and many others. The majority of the proposals in this legislation were defeated in committee during budget negotiations 6 months ago. The bill will have a "Full Committee Work Session" on February 2. Click on the below link for the text of the bill.

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/legislation/2010/HB1664.html>

Department of Education Public Hearing for Special Education Rules

On January 13, 2010 Ellen Edgerly provided testimony on the behalf of the Brain Injury Association of New Hampshire on the proposed definitions and assessments for children with acquired and traumatic brain injuries that were proposed by the subcommittee. Download of letter attached.

Governor's Commission on Disability Legislation

Attached is the download of the legislation that the Governor's Commission on Disability is following.

Waitlist Article in the Concord Monitor

What the Legislature gives, it can usually take back. The fear is that future lawmakers, faced with a revenue shortfall, will reverse course and renege on the pledge they made to the disabled and their families a generation ago. That must not happen. Nor can lawmakers, and the state's residents, rest on their laurels now that the developmental disabilities list has been eliminated.

New Hampshire made a promise to another group of citizens in need when it became the first state to de-institutionalize the great majority of its mental patients. They too were promised that they would get the services they need in a timely fashion in community settings. That isn't happening. Hospitals are closing their psychiatric wings - none exist in the state's northern tier - and community mental health centers are in crisis. The developmental disabilities waiting list has been eliminated, but the state still has promises to keep. "

Full article linked below.

<http://www.concordmonitor.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100117/OPINION/1170327/1260/NEWS04>

Copy of e-mail that was sent to all representatives and senators from Representative Sally Kelly, Sponsor of HB 383, Seatbelt Bill

Sent: Mon 1/4/2010 2:07 PM

To: ~All Representatives; ~Senators

Subject: FW: From A Friend: 'State Representative Injured In Head-On Car Crash - New Hampshire News Story - WMUR Manchester' -I'm starting this new year with thanks and gratitude. Thank you so much to you, my family at the State House for your prayers, good thoughts, visits, cards, e-mails and phone calls over the past 3 months. The power of this energy helped me immeasurably, especially during that first, very challenging month. In many ways, I consider this period has been a blessing for me with more time for pause, reflection and connecting with new and existing friends.

Now that I am recovering physically, I am starting to process what happened to me on October 9, which is how I found this video of an interview that was conducted 2 days after my accident. When you go to the link, the video will eventually load in the top right section of the screen.

The person who hit me was driving a Dodge Caravan (quite large) vs. my (quite small) Beetle. He received injuries far worse than mine. He spent close to two months at Dartmouth Hitchcock where I only spent close to three weeks in Concord Hospital and rehab.

He did not wear a seat belt (which was his choice). He had neither health nor car insurance (his choice). He has cost all of us NH citizens significant \$\$\$ (which is not our choice).

Seat belt legislation and your votes are for another day. (I just wanted to plant the seed!)

Today is my day to say "thank you" and that I'm glad to be back and joining you all this week. A very happy 2010 to you all and I'll see you in Concord!

Respectfully yours,
Rep.Sally Kelly
Chichester & Pembroke

The link:

<http://www.wmur.com/news/21268199/detail.html?taf=man>

Teresa Rosenberger, BIANH Lobbyist Departing

FairPoint Communications, Inc. has announced that Teresa Rhodes Rosenberger has been named the company's New Hampshire State President. Teresa plans on leaving Devine, Millimet & Branch in February. Good Luck! **"Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."** – Thomas Edison

If you have any questions on this Brain Injury Legislative Tracker Bulletin, please contact me at 332-9891.

**Ellen M. Edgerly, Community Organizer
Brain Injury Association of New Hampshire**