



Policy and Legislative Action Network

February 2014 Newsletter

2014 New Mexico Legislative Session is Underway

The 51st Legislature of the State of New Mexico opened on January 21, 2014, for a thirty-day session. During the first half of the session, at least 20 bills and memorials related to disability issues were introduced. Subject matter included Medicaid, education, autism, and other developmental disabilities. Read in-depth status reports detailing legislative activity from Jim Jackson, Executive Director of Disability Rights New Mexico. Click here for [Report #1](#), [Report #2](#), and [Report #3](#).

Two Action Alerts Issued

It's time to act! During the second week of the legislative session, the PLAN issued two Action Alerts for bills concerning the DD waiver program and funding for autism services:

DD waiver – SB 55 (Sen. Bill Soules)

This bill would require the Department of Health and the Human Services Department to develop a 5-year plan to address the DD waiver waiting list, and would appropriate additional funding to serve individuals on the waitlist. (The bill originally called for \$25 million in the upcoming fiscal year; it was amended to reduce the amount to \$10 million.) The bill passed the Senate Public Affairs Committee and is pending in the Senate Finance Committee. Click [here](#) to contact Senate Finance Committee members and express your support for SB 55.

Autism services –

HB 69 (Rep. Liz Thomson) and SB 109 (Sen. Lisa Torracco)

These identical House and Senate bills would appropriate \$350,000 for autism services. SB 109 has already passed the Senate Public Affairs Committee and is now pending in the Senate Finance Committee. Click [here](#) to contact Senate Finance Committee members to express your support for SB 109.

HB 69 passed the House Health, Government, and Indian Affairs Committee and is pending in the House Appropriations and Finance Committee (HAFC). Click [here](#) to contact HAFC members to show your support for HB 69.

Need a refresher on the legislative process?

You can review our [Legislative Toolkit](#) online for information on how bills become laws in NM, types of legislation, navigating the NM Legislature website, and talking with your elected officials about issues that are important to you.

About the PLAN

The Policy & Legislative Action Network (PLAN) is a group of individuals concerned with disability-related issues in New Mexico. The PLAN, administered by Disability Rights New Mexico, strives to positively influence policy that impacts individuals with disabilities across the state.

Upcoming Events:

February 17, 2014
Disability Rights Awareness Day @ Courtyard Marriot, Santa Fe

February 18, 2014
Disability Rights Awareness Day @ The Roundhouse, Santa Fe

February 20, 2014
NM Legislative Session ends.

Watch your e-mail

for Action Alerts from the PLAN. Throughout February, we will send you updates on legislative activity that impacts the disability community. Help us influence our NM legislators! Need help finding your legislators? (Click [here](#)).

Disability Rights Awareness Days, Feb. 17-18, 2014

Join us and partnering agencies for Disability Rights Awareness Days in Santa Fe on February 17-18, 2014. This year's theme is "Access to Healthcare for All." On Monday, February 17th, you can attend training and advocacy sessions and hear keynote speaker Congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham at the Courtyard Marriot, 3346 Cerrillos Rd., Santa Fe, 87507. (Click [here](#) for registration info).

Join us at the Roundhouse on Tuesday, February 18th, where there will be exhibits and guest speakers, including Hector Balderas, New Mexico State Auditor. (The program will be in the Rotunda from 11:30 – 1:00). For more information, contact the Arc of New Mexico at 1-800-358-6493.

Pre-Legislative Forum a Success!

Thank you to all who participated in the Pre-Legislative forum on January 11 in Albuquerque. We had 78 conference participants joining us for a day of advocacy training in the disability community. Many thanks to our guest speakers, including Sen. Bill O'Neill, Rep. Liz Thomson, Doris Husted, and Gay Finlayson, as well as DRNM and Disability Coalition staff: Jim Jackson, Ellen Pinnes, Nancy Koenigsberg, and Jason Gordon. As Sen. O'Neill and Rep. Thomson noted, *we* are the educators of our elected officials, and it's our collective task to make our voices heard in the legislature. Thank you for joining us!

*The Policy and Legislative Action Network (PLAN) is administered by Disability Rights New Mexico
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