



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES

May 25, 2017

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to request your support for Bill 22-0154, the “*Citizens with Intellectual Disabilities Civil Rights Restoration Act of 2017*.” This bill does two important things for people with intellectual disabilities that will ensure that District law reflects a more person centered approach. First, the bill will end mandatory civil commitment for people with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities as a condition to receiving certain residential services, bringing the District in line with the practice in all other 50 states. Second, the bill creates a formal supported decision-making process as a less restrictive alternative to guardianship, which supports people with a range of disabilities to make as many decisions as they are able about their own lives with the support of those who know them best.

Based on conversations with the community, this new version of the bill makes two important changes from the previous version of this bill:

1. **People may choose to provide informed consent to continue their commitment during their annual status hearing.** This was based on feedback that for those who their appointed attorney have become a part of their support network, the decision to voluntarily continue or terminate commitment should be intentional and not automatic, as was written in the previous version of the bill; and
2. **People who are currently committed without family support should have more options available to them in deciding whether to continue or terminate their own commitment.** The list of people who can support a person to make this decision is expanded to include various family members, guardians, or an especially designated guardian *ad litem* appointed by the Court for this specific purpose only.

A hearing on the bill is scheduled before the Committee on Human Services on June 15, 2017, at 10 am in Room 412 of the John A. Wilson Building. If you have any other questions or want to discuss the bill or amendments further, please contact, Omonigho Ufomata, DDS Legislative and Policy Analyst, at (202) 527 4686 or via email, omonigho.ufomata@dc.gov.

The reintroduced bill, along with a Fact Sheet and a Frequently Asked Questions & Answer sheet is available on the DDS website www.dds.dc.gov. DDS will host information sessions at times and locations listed on the next page.

Thank you and I look forward to your support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew Reese".

Andrew P. Reese





DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES
presents,

2 INFORMATION SESSIONS

DECISION-MAKING RIGHTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Department on Disability Services invites you to learn about proposed legislation that will give people with disabilities greater decision making rights. DDS will host

INFORMATION SESSIONS

regarding

B22-0154 “Citizens with Intellectual Disabilities Civil Rights Restoration Act of 2017”

Tuesday, June 6, 6 PM – 7 PM

RISE Demonstration Center

**2730 Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave, SE, Washington, DC
20032**

Thursday, June 8, 11 AM - 12 PM

Shaw (Watha T. Daniel) Public Library

1630 7th Street, NW, Washington DC 20001

Come learn about pending legislation that:

- seeks to end all new civil commitment for people with intellectual disabilities,
- provides an opportunity for people currently committed to continue court oversight, and
- recognizes supported decision-making as a less restrictive alternative to guardianship, so that people with disabilities are able to make as many choices as they can about their own lives.

Choice Matters!

To request reasonable accommodations, contact Jestina Heroe at (202) 730-1586 or jestina.heroe@dc.gov.

