



# GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES

## LEGISLATION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IS CLOSE TO PASSING

### **New Name: The Disability Services Reform Amendment Act of 2017**

You may know this bill by its old name, the Citizens with Intellectual Disabilities Civil Rights Restoration Act. Project Action! and others want this bill to become a new D.C. law.

### **First Reading Scheduled for January 9, 2018 at City Council**

On January 9, 2018, every City Council Member voted to pass this bill. That's the first of two required City Council votes. We believe the second vote to pass the bill will be held on February 6. After that, the bill will go to Mayor Bowser for her signature. The Mayor supports this bill.

**What does this bill do?** The bill has three parts. Each part does one big thing.

#### Part 1. Creates A New Formal Complaint Process To Use Against DDS or a Provider

There would be a new formal complaint process for people to use when unhappy with their DDA supports or providers. A person outside of DDS would investigate the complaint, make findings and make recommendations to DDS. A person can have a supporter help with the complaint. The complaint must be decided on time and in writing. DDS must continue supports and services the person already receives while the case is being reviewed. DDS or a provider may not take action against the person for filing a complaint. DDS has to explain the right to file an appeal if the person is not satisfied.

#### Part 2. Changes D.C. Law about Civil Commitment for the Better; Gives People Choice.

No new people would be committed in D.C. People who are committed now can choose whether they want to remain committed or not. There will be time to decide and people can have help making it. People who are committed will have this choice at their hearing. Ending commitment will not change any DDA supports a person gets.

#### Part 3. A Person Can Formally Choose A Supporter To Assist in Making Decisions.

Any person with a disability can use a new form called a Supported Decision-Making Agreement to name a supporter to assist with making decisions. Stores, restaurants, medical offices, hospitals and more would have to allow the supporter to be present. The supporter is there to help with the person making his or her own decisions. Supported Decision-Making is an alternative to guardianship for people who can make their own decisions with assistance.

