

## Colorado Legislative Developments - 2008

**Waiting List Assistance for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities** – While this budget fix was not a law, it is important to share. The recent legislative session addressed the growing waiting list. Approximately 700 new resources (slots) were created to provide relief for individuals on the waiting list. While 700 new resources falls well-short of the statewide wait list need, this legislative action is a significant step, as previous years' attempts to garner more slots netted no more than about 100 at a time. TRE's service area should receive about 120 of these resources.

**House Bill 1031 - Developmental Disabilities Waiting List Navigator** – Creates a position called a “Navigator” to assist individuals with developmental disabilities who are the waiting list for services. *(Jack Pommer, D-Boulder, and Moe Keller, D-N. Colo.)*

**House Bill 1047 – State Set Asides for Severely Disabled** – Encourages the State to consider individuals with disabilities in establishing state contracts, e.g., special consideration of companies who employ mostly disabled workers. *(Bob Gardner, R-Colorado Springs, and Betty Boyd, R-Lakewood)*

**House Bill 1072 – Medicaid Buy-In for Disabled Persons** – Requires actuarial study to develop a Medicaid Buy-in program for people with disabilities who want to return to work but require a Medicaid level of services. Currently some disabled adults must keep their incomes low in order to qualify for Medicaid. *(John Soper, D-Thornton, and Suzanne Williams, D-Aurora)*

**House Bill 1101 – Developmental Disabilities Waiting List for Services** – Requires an annual review of the waiting list situation by the Colorado General Assembly and provides heightened awareness of the waiting list crisis. It also will prevent monies not yet expended from being reassigned from their intended purpose of helping those individuals with developmental disabilities. Creates the Developmental Disabilities Services Cash Fund with the goal of eliminating the state's developmental disability services waiting lists by 2013. *(Bob Gardner, R-Colorado Springs, and Scott Renfroe, R-Weld County)*

**House Bill 1127 – Developmental Disabled Employee Income Tax Credit** -- Establishes an income tax credit for a taxpayer who hires an individual with a developmental disability for a job in one of nine pilot-program counties. Allows the credit only for new employees who are compensated in accordance with minimum wage laws. If successful, will expand to all counties within three years. *(Larry Liston, R-Colorado Springs, and Dan Gibbs, D-Silverthorne)*

**House Bill 1220 – Developmental Disabilities Statutory Cleanup** – Eliminates statutory provisions to comply with federal waiver requirements and current practices associated with services and supports for persons with developmental disabilities. The changes bring new Colorado practice into compliance with national directives. One specific place this helps TRE is it will not be required to raise a 5% local match to the Medicaid funds received. *(Bernie Buesher, D-Grand Junction, and Moe Keller, D-N. Colo.)*

**House Bill 1246 – Registry of Caregivers** – Creates within the Div. for Developmental Disabilities a registry of caregivers with a substantiated allegation of exploitation, mistreatment, neglect, physical abuse, or sexual abuse of an individual with a developmental disability. The intent is to prevent an employee who has abused an individual at one agency from obtaining employment at another agency or another CCB or any place in the developmental disabilities field. *(Gwen Green, D-JeffCo, and Moe Keller, D-N. Colo.)*

**Senate Bill 02 – Family Caregiver of People with Developmental Disabilities** - Expands the definition of “least restrictive environment” to include the family home, if appropriate, and adds a definition for “family caregiver.” Allows the Dept. of Human Services to directly reimburse a qualified family caregiver for certain services provided in their homes. *(Betty Boyd, R-Lakewood, and John Soper, D-Thornton)*

**Senate Bill 04 – State Employment of Persons with DD** - Encourages and provide incentives for state agencies to give meaningful employment opportunities to persons with developmental disabilities and to improve the State's practices in employing, supervising, and supporting persons with developmental disabilities. *(Moe Keller, D-N. Colo., and Bob Gardner, R-Colorado Springs)*

**Senate Bill 05 – Supported Employment Outcomes for Developmentally Disabled** – Establishes an outcome-based supported employment system for integrated employment services for persons with disabilities, including developmental disabilities, that creates a reimbursement schedule for community centered boards and agencies. It encourages supported employment of individuals with developmental disabilities. *(Suzanne Williams, D-Aurora, and Jack Pommer, D-Boulder)*

**Senate Bill 163 – Autism Commission** - Creates an autism commission to study autism spectrum disorders, identify existing services and gaps in services for people with autism spectrum disorders, and identify best practices in providing services. Directs the autism commission to develop a 10-year strategic plan for Colorado that clarifies the array of services and supports needed for persons with autism. *(Brandon Shaffer, R-Boulder, and Diane Primavera, D-Broomfield)*