

A RESOLUTION

17-457

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

December 11, 2007

To declare the sense of the Council that there is a need to modernize District of Columbia law regarding the rights and services for residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities and for their families, and to express the guiding values and principles for this new law.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the "Sense of the Council Regarding Rights and Services for Residents with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Their Families Resolution of 2007".

Sec. 2. The Council finds that:

(a) It is the policy of the District of Columbia that residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities have all the civil and legal rights enjoyed by all other residents of the District of Columbia and the United States.

(b) All District of Columbia residents benefit when individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities live with independence and dignity in the most inclusive and most integrated-community setting possible and have the freedom and opportunity to fully participate in the cultural, economic, educational, political, and social fabric of their communities.

(c) Residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities are effective advocates who speak up on their own behalf and should be engaged as active partners by District of Columbia government, service providers, and communities.

(d) Residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities are best able to determine their own needs and should be afforded all the information, opportunities, and support required to make meaningful choices about where they live, work, and play and, to the greatest extent possible, to control the design and delivery of their services.

(e) Families, by far, provide the greatest quantity and, in many instances, quality of services and support for their family members with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

ENROLLED ORIGINAL

(f) The District of Columbia should implement a model system of effective quality services and support for residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities and for their families, which:

- (1) Fully recognizes the individual's rights, abilities, and preferences;
- (2) Is rooted in best practices, ongoing innovation, and standards of excellence;
- (3) Seeks to maintain a high quality of life and encourages the maximum development of the ability and potential of each individual;
- (4) Offers flexibility and a full range of service options, including comprehensive-family support throughout the life of the individual with an intellectual or developmental ability;
- (5) Adopts an individualized, person-centered approach that is responsive to the unique strengths, abilities, needs, culture, values, and preferences of each individual and family;
- (6) Builds familial and community support and ensures that each individual has meaningful opportunities to develop and maintain relationships with family, friends, coworkers, and others;
- (7) Is delivered by a diverse workforce that is well-qualified and highly motivated, one which receives ongoing training, demonstrates necessary skills, and regularly uses best practices; and
- (8) Is distributed with fairness and equity and produces measurable results that demonstrate that the services have met the goals and needs of, and satisfied, each individual and family.

(g) After 29 years, the Mentally Retarded Citizens Constitutional Rights and Dignity Act of 1978, effective March 3, 1979 (D.C. Law 2-137; D.C. Official Code § 7-1301.02 *et seq.*), no longer reflects existing federal laws and programs, best practices in service delivery, or contemporary knowledge of the rights, abilities, and preferences of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

(h) There is a clear need for new legislation to reorganize and modernize District of Columbia law governing services and support for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and for their families, which has been developed by a coalition of residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, advocates, service providers, and other community stakeholders.

Sec. 3. It is the sense of the Council that the values and principles set forth in this resolution shall be reflected in new legislation introduced during the current Council session to reorganize and modernize District of Columbia laws governing services and support for residents with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

Sec. 4. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.