

2009 Legislative Report for CTD/Coalition of Texans with Disabilities

BILL & SPONSORS	CTD'S ROLE/PARTNERS	WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU
BUDGET		
<p>SB1 (budget bill) Reduce Wait Lists/Expansion of Community-based Services</p>	<p>CTD testimonies, letter writing, direct visits with legislative offices, Capitol days</p> <p>Partners: all disability advocacy organizations.</p>	<p>PASSED</p> <p>All funds totaling \$433 M. Expands the funding for community based services by 14,632 new slots.</p>
<p>SB1(budget bill) Increase in community attendant wages</p>	<p>CTD testimonies, letter writing, direct visits with legislative offices, Capitol days</p> <p>Partners: ADAPT, PACT, TX Ctr for Disability Studies, TAHC</p>	<p>PASSED</p> <p>\$300 M total funds to increase wages to an average of \$8 per hour. Will raise lowest wages more.</p>
<p>SB1(budget bill) Eliminate wait list for Comprehensive Rehab Services</p>	<p>CTD testimonies, letter writing, fiscal analyses, direct visits with legislative offices, Capitol days</p> <p>Partners: Brain Injury Association of TX, Brain Injury Alliance of TX</p>	<p>PASSED</p> <p>\$4.3M for rehab for traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries during critical first year after injury</p>
<p>SB1 (budget bill) Centers for Independent Living</p>	<p>CTD testimonies, fiscal analysis, office visits, Capitol days</p> <p>Partners: SILC, Advocacy Inc., TX Assn of CILs</p>	<p>PASSED</p> <p>\$1.5M to establish 3 new centers for independent living</p>
STATE SCHOOLS REFORM		
<p>SB 643 (Nelson/Rose)</p>	<p>CTD began working before the session with bill authors to draft major reform legislation and was among the lead advocates that offered testimony/direct visits with legislative offices, state wide media and Capitol rallies. SB643 did address emergency protections.</p> <p>Partners: TX Ctr for Disability Studies, ADAPT, Advocacy Inc., ARC, Community Now, TCDD</p>	<p>PASSED</p> <p>State school emergency legislation to ensure safety of residents with training requirements for center employees, and investigation procedures for reports of abuse, neglect and exploitation; background checks of center employees and volunteers, video surveillance and an independent mortality review system.</p>

<p>HB 1317 (Rose) SB 2860 (Ellis) SB 2407 (Zaffirini) SB 639 (Lucio) SB 1407 (Shapleigh) and more</p>	<p>The partnering disability organizations collaborated on these bills.</p>	<p>NOT PASSED Comprehensive reform bills: create state long term plan including consolidation and closure, waiver reform etc.</p>
VOTING LEGISLATION		
<p>SB 362 (Fraser), HB 125 (Betty Brown)</p>	<p>CTD, Advocacy Inc., AARP, LULAC, ACLU as lead advocates in opposition Testimony/direct visits with legislative offices/press conferences</p>	<p>NOT PASSED Kept all onerous "voter ID" bills from passing. These laws would have effectively suppressed voting by the elderly and people with disabilities.</p>
<p>HB 355 (Aycock), HB 419 (Betty Brown), HB 381 (Callegari) and more</p>	<p>CTD, Advocacy Inc. and AARP as lead advocates in opposition Testimony/direct visits with legislative offices.</p>	<p>NOT PASSED Voting bills designed to change Texas Election Code to exempt political subdivisions from having accessible voting machines and meet the same accessibility requirements used in federal elections.</p>
<p>HB 3335 (Callegari)</p>	<p>CTD had direct meetings with Rep. Callegari's office to create an amendment to protect voting rights.</p>	<p>PASSED Amended to keep provisions for accessible voting machines in small water districts elections of less than 250 people and rules they must follow if seeking an exemption to not supply an accessible voting machine.</p>
Diverse Disability Legislation		
<p>HB 849 (Strama), SB 1150 (Hinojosa)</p>	<p>CTD initiated bill, offered testimonies, letter writing, direct visits with legislative offices, Capitol days of advocacy, statewide media campaign</p>	<p>NOT PASSED This bill would waive the state's sovereign immunity to ADA complaints, ending Texas' offensive practice of claiming immunity for its acts of disability discrimination. Was blocked in the House Calendars Committee.</p>
<p>HB 1805 (Kuempel/Estes)</p>	<p>CTD initiated bill; testimonies, letter writing, direct visits with legislative offices. Partner: TX Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America</p>	<p>PASSED A reasonable accommodation bill. Legalized the use of laser sighting devices by hunters who are physically disabled.</p>

<p>HB 970 (Lucio III)</p>	<p>CTD initiated bill, testimonies, letter writing, direct visits with legislative offices</p> <p>Partners: TX Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Rehabilitation Council of Texas, Goodwill</p>	<p>NOT PASSED</p> <p>Would allow people with disabilities to gain a (HUB) Historically Underutilized Business status for the purpose of doing business under that certification with the State.</p>
<p>SB 187 (Deuell, Lucio III)</p>	<p>CTD in strong support of lead advocate TX Ctr for Disability Studies with office visits, Capitol days, testimonies</p> <p>Partners: ADAPT, Down By The Border, Advocacy Inc., TCDD</p>	<p>PASSED</p> <p>Allows working families whose income is above eligibility standards and with kids with disabilities to buy in to Medicaid. \$20M included in the state budget.</p>
<p>HB 978 (Burnam, Watson)</p>	<p>CTD was instrumental in getting this bill unstuck in the House and moved through the Senate. Testimonies, letter writing, direct visits and meetings with legislative offices.</p> <p>Partners: Texas Employment Lawyers Assn, Advocacy Inc, Epilepsy Foundation of Central and South Texas, Tracey Michol</p>	<p>PASSED</p> <p>The United States Congress amended the original ADA in the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 to clarify the meaning of "disability." This bill brings Texas labor code into alignment with the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 and more fully protects employees from discrimination based on disability.</p>
<p>HB 1343 (Menendez/Van de Putte)</p>	<p>CTD and the Alamo Council of the Blind-Texas were primary advocates; offered testimonies, letter writing, direct visits and meetings with legislative offices.</p>	<p>PASSED</p> <p>Will create a stronger deterrent to drivers who fail to yield the right-of-way to a disabled or visually impaired pedestrian, causing injury or death. The fine was increased to \$500 and 30 hours of community service.</p>
<p>HB 236 (Rodriguez/Watson)</p>	<p>CTD, Advocacy Inc and SILC were primary advocates; offered testimonies, letter writing, direct visits and meetings with legislative offices, Capitol days</p>	<p>PASSED</p> <p>Amends current law relating to the procedures to obtain an exemption from the motor vehicle sales tax for motor vehicles driven by persons who have orthopedic handicaps. This will streamline the process making it easier for everyone involved.</p>

<p>SB 1612 (Lucio/Rodriguez)</p>	<p>CTD strongly backed the initiator VCFS Texas, a new parents group. Technical assistance to VCFS Texas, testimonies, letter writing, direct visits and meetings with legislative offices.</p>	<p>PASSED An awareness campaign on Velo Cardiofacial Syndrome (VCFS), a little known genetic disorder that is the second most common after Down Syndrome; information on VCFS would be sent to medical professionals and families when a child exhibits at least two indicators of VCFS.</p>
<p>SB 1804 (Zaffirini/Hughes)</p>	<p>CTD strongly backed the initiator, The Greater Texas Rehab Providers' Council. CTD negotiations, letter writing, direct visits and meetings with legislative offices.</p>	<p>PASSED Requires professional expertise in fitting prescribed wheelchair mobility systems that is currently lacking for Medicaid recipients, including kids with disabilities.</p>
<p>HB 400 (Herrero/Hinojosa)</p>	<p>CTD and the City of Corpus Christi ADA Office were primary advocates. Testimonies, letter writing, direct visits and meetings with legislative offices. Partner: Advocacy Inc.</p>	<p>PASSED Allows a grace period for a person cited for illegally parking a vehicle with an expired disabled parking placard by obtaining a valid placard within 20 working days or before your first court date to have the citation dismissed.</p>
<p>HB 3095 (Harless/Watson)</p>	<p>CTD and Advocacy Inc were primary advocates and offered testimonies, letter writing, direct visits and meetings with legislative offices.</p>	<p>PASSED Simplifies enforcement and increases the fines for illegally parking in handicapped parking spaces from \$250 min - \$500 max to a min of \$500 & a max of \$750. With each offense the fines increase and community service is added.</p>
<p>HB 155 (Gutierrez/Zaffirini)</p>	<p>CTD was primary advocate; testimonies, letter writing, direct visits and meetings with legislative offices. CTD was instrumental in getting this recreation bill unstuck in the House and through most of the Senate before dying on the last day.</p>	<p>NOT PASSED Would exempt a person who has a permanent physical disability from the prohibition against operating a motor vehicle in or on a protected freshwater area. This would allow them to access rivers for recreation more easily.</p>
<p>HCR 22 (Burnam/Carona)</p>	<p>CTD one of many groups and individuals supporting the Chishty family. Main partner: Community NOW!</p>	<p>PASSED Permits the Chishty family to sue the State of Texas for serious injury inflicted to Haseeb Chishty while residing in Denton State School, limits amount of possible award.</p>

HB 3325 (Hughes)	<p>CTD testified in strong support of highly controversial issue.</p> <p>Partners: TX Ctr for Disability Studies, Advocacy Inc., Right to Life</p>	<p>NOT PASSED</p> <p>"Don't pull the plug bill" on advanced directives and who can make end of life decisions.</p>
HB4402, SB204 (Martinez Fischer/Van de Putte)	<p>CTD in support.</p> <p>Partners: Natl. MS Society, Epilepsy Foundation of Central and South Texas</p>	<p>PASSED</p> <p>Study on the impact of unauthorized drug switching and generic substitution which can be dangerous for persons with epilepsy, mental illness, MS and other disabilities requiring precise prescriptions.</p>
SB 1395 (Zaffirini)	<p>CTD in strong support of initiators Down Syndrome Society, ARC, Texas Advocates and Advocacy Inc</p>	<p>NOT PASSED</p> <p>Respectful language bill would ban the "R" word in statute and official use.</p>