



News

JULY 1987

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT... THE WAY OF THE FUTURE, OR MORE OF THE SAME?

Supported employment is becoming a pretty hot issue at both the national and state levels. It is a new kind of vocational service mandated in the 1986 Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act. Basically it provides for time limited assistance (18 months) for severely disabled persons which will allow them to participate in competitive work. This assistance is often done by "job coaches" who help people adjust to their new jobs by coaching them in the skills needed to perform the job tasks. Once the disabled person is comfortable and able to perform the work, the job coach is phased out. Other types of support include transportation, interpreters, rehabilitation technology, attendants, and family counseling, to name a few. Special emphasis has been made on serving people with chronic mental illness.

Although Supported Employment Grant money was mandated for 1987 The Rehabilitation Services Administration RSA, only recently sent out proposed regulations for comment. These regulations were much stricter than the original law's language and narrowed the possibilities of who could be served. CTD, ARC, UCP, NCIL,

and a number of other consumer groups commented in opposition to this narrowing of interpretation. (If you would like a copy of CTD's comments contact the CTD central office.) One of the main problems is the regulations say those who can be served should be limited to disabled people who are receiving an ongoing array of support services and job skill training at least twice a month at the job site. CTD believes this unfairly cuts a lot of people out of the picture. Also it defeats the purpose of supported work as a transition to competitive employment. Hopefully the final regulations will broaden the scope of the services back out to the original scope described in the Rehabilitation Act Amendments.

In the meantime however, the grants must be given out in 1987, so the Texas Commission for the Blind and Texas Rehabilitation Commission are developing their plans in order to apply as soon as possible. TRC is contacting 20 organizations (like MHMR Community Centers, TCD, and the independent living centers) about providing these services. TCB plans to provide supported employment services through the Lighthouses, but they may subcontract out to other organizations. Organizations interested in providing these services should contact Ron Trull at the TRC central office or Bill Agnell at the TCB Central Office.

Although the 30 day comment period on the regulations has ended, advocates can still have an impact. Services are still in the planning stages. Will this be a chance to start changing some of the ERS and Lighthouse sheltered workshops into more transitional employment opportunities, (so for example someone would graduate from sheltered

employment to supported employment to competitive employment)? If you are interested in these issues please contact Stephanie Thomas or Bob Kafka at the CTD central office 512/443-8252 V/TTY.



PEOPLE POWER WORKS

The Special Session has ended and the budget battle has come to a close for now. After more than a year of struggle over funding for state services, the Texas legislature passed a \$38.3 billion budget. Rallies last summer, efforts during this past winter's regular session (including the Disabled Consumer Day, lots of letters, post cards, phone calls, mailgrams, and testimony) and the vigil at the Governor's mansion have paid off!

While at some points it looked as if human services would take 27-50% cuts, in the end human services fared pretty well. (Public education seems to have received the largest blow in the appropriations process this time.)

In the Texas Department of Human Services, DHS, Community Care for Aged and Disabled received \$362 million (including \$2.8 million for respite care and \$2.8 million to expand services to medically dependent children). Adult Protective Services received \$1 million annually for follow up services. ICF-MR received \$18 million over 1987 levels of funding. EPSDT (Early Diagnostics and Treatment) received \$44 million to provide for caseload growth. Vendor Drug payments allow for annual rate adjustments of 3.4 - 3.5%.

Texas Rehabilitation Commission's, TRC, Vocational Rehabilitation Program received \$167,930 above '87 levels for case services and additional counselors. Independent living received an addition \$3 million over the biennium, and deaf-blind client services received \$428,000 for the biennium. (This is much less than the \$1,761,000 proposed by the Senate.) \$800,000 was appropriated for Transition Services (the Valley Project AKA NETS). Extended Rehabilitation Services was increased \$2.4 million.

A rider allowing dollars to follow the client was passed as was a provision that funds from sale of parts of the Austin State School be used to provide certain services in the Lelsz Implementation Plan. Unfortunately only \$1.2 million (of the \$2.6 million needed to fund existing caseloads) for Intermediate Community Services was appropriated.

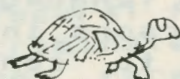
MHMR funded In Home and Family Support at \$6 million for the biennium. These funds would go toward services for individuals with mental retardation and mental illness. The Texas Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities TPCDD has agreed to fund a pilot program, coordinated through DHS, for non-mentally developmentally disabled Texans. \$350,000 was allotted for '88 and possibly up to \$500,000 in '89. The TPCDD is to be commended for their support of these services and help in bridging a major gap created by unbending bureaucracies.

The Commission for the Blind, TCB, and Commission for the Deaf, TCD, maintained the same levels as during the regular session's appropriations process. For TCB that will mean \$21.4

million for '88 and '89. For TCD that means funding at '87 levels with \$15,000 increase for the TDD Placement and Maintenance program.

Aside from budget issues CTD was part of another important victory in this special session. The medical malpractice tort reforms which had been proposed died with the close of the session. These reforms would have protected medical professionals found guilty of malpractice and left those who were injured and disabled with limited protections.

It seems more legislators may be beginning to realize human services are a valuable function of the state government. Follow up by disability advocates before the next session, thanking legislators for their support and educating them about the needs, will be especially important.



THE PRESIDENT'S 504 REGULATIONS

The Executive Office of the President has proposed 504 regulations which would apply to 13 agencies including: NASA, V.A., and Federal Emergency Management Agency. The Justice Department will accept comments through August 31st. For more information see the July 2 Federal Register p. 25124 or contact the Coordination and Review Section, Civil Rights Division/U.S. Dept. of Justice/Washington D.C. 20530/(202) 724-2222 voice or 724-7678 TDD.



FEDERAL UPDATE

The Fair Housing Act is the first national piece of legislation addressing housing discrimination against persons with disabilities. Specifically S.558/ HR. 1158 would prohibit denial of housing on the basis of handicap, and clarify that it would be discriminatory for a landlord to not allow modifications by a disabled tenant who is willing to pay for the modifications. Recently the Kennedy-Specter substitute to S. 558 was accepted by the Judiciary Committee's Constitution Subcommittee and a hearing on this substitute held July 23. This substitute clarifies the intent and scope of the original bill and extends coverage so that new multifamily housing construction built 30 months after enactment must meet minimal accessibility standards. The House bill (HR1158) does not contain the stronger language of the Senate substitute. Persons interested in this issue should to contact Congressmen Jack Brooks and John Bryant of Texas. Both serve on the House Judiciary Committee which will need to adopt the substitute language if it passes in the Senate. This is a critical issue and we need your help!

CTD has a fact sheet on this issue. If you would like more information contact Stephanie at the CTD Central Office 512/443-8252.

Medicaid Reform, once known as the Chaffee Amendments and the Family Living Amendments, was revised and will be reintroduced in the near future. With each revision the age of

eligibility drops and in this latest version the reforms would cover severely disabled persons aged 22 or below who meet the federal SSI test.

This is important legislation because it provides a funding source for a myriad of services needed by many disabled people in order to live in the community.

Services covered under this legislation include: case management, protective intervention, a wide range of therapies, attendant services, housing, transportation, dental and vocational services. They will be available to developmentally disabled persons living in the community. The state must provide assurances and a plan as to how the funds are spent.

CTD has a fact sheet on this proposed legislation. For more information contact Stephanie at the CTD Central Office.

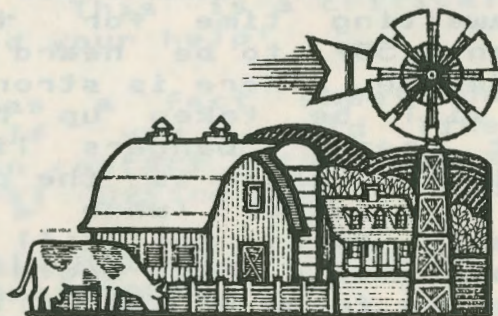
The Civil Rights Restoration Act (CRRRA) of 1987 is moving through Congress slowly but surely. It would reaffirm that federal funds will not be used to discriminate on the basis of disability, sex, race or age in any area of an entity receiving federal funds. S.557 and HB.1214, the Senate and House versions of the CRRRA have passed out of committee. Advocates are awaiting time for the Senate version S.557 to be heard by the full Senate. There is strong hope the bill will be taken up before the August break. Dangers lie ahead on the floor: there is the possibility of a filibuster (when a legislator literally talks the bill to death), and amendments which would completely change the focus of the bill (relating to abortions, religious tenants, and similar issues).

Supporters of this legislation should contact Texas Senators Lloyd Bentsen and Phil Gramm. Urge their support of the Civil Rights Restoration Act S.557 as reported out by subcommittee, without any substantive amendments. Also ask that they vote for cloture (a limit on debate which stops a filibuster).



AIRPLANE HASSLES?

The Federal Aviation Administration, FAA, has a new hotline disabled travelers can call to report illegal practices by the airlines. Call 1-800-FAA-SURE. For more information contact Fred Pelzman, Manager Community and Consumer Liaison Division, APA-200, Federal Aviation Administration, Washington D.C. 20591. (202)267-3481.



INDEPENDENT LIVING AND RURAL AMERICA THE REAL FRONTIER

The unique challenge of providing independent living services to people with disabilities living in rural communities is the focus of a new publication from the ILRU Research and Training Center on Independent Living in Houston.

Independent Living and Rural America: The Real Frontier examines barriers preventing severely disabled persons in rural areas from living independently, highlights findings from a comprehensive survey of 13 rural independent living centers located across the country, profiles two rural independent living centers with distinctly different approaches to service delivery, and makes recommendations about actions that can be taken to increase independent living services to rural disabled people.

To order, send your name, address, and a check or money order for \$5.00 to ILRU: 3233 Wesleyan, Suite 100; Houston, TX 77027. Allow up to six weeks for delivery.

This is the sixth publication in ILRU's issues in Independent Living technical report series which addresses issues of current relevance to the independent living field. Contact ILRU for a complete listing of those works and other resource materials focusing on independent living which are available from ILRU.

For further information, contact Laurel Richards, ILRU, (713)960-9961.

WE'VE MOVED!



CTD has moved our central office. We are no longer located on the School for the Deaf campus. After many years of TSD generously helping us with office space, we have outgrown the space.

We are now located at 1339 Lamar Square Drive, just off South Lamar near Trudy's restaurant and right next door to ARCIL and Mary Lee Foundation. We are keeping our same telephone number and mailing address:

P.O. Box 4709
Austin, Texas 78765
512/443-8252 Voice/TDD

If you're in the neighborhood plan to attend our Open House August 7th (invitation enclosed). And many thanks to TSD for their support of CTD which has allowed us to grow.

CTD EDITORS' NOTE

The CTD Newsletter is edited and published by the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, a state-wide cross disability consumer group. Any member who wishes to submit future articles for publication should send them to:

CTD
P.O. Box 4709
Austin, TX 78765

MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND COME TO HOUSTON!

Where it all began nine and a half years ago... the idea for a state coalition of citizens with disabilities. And that is where we will be holding our 10th Annual CTD Convention. The dates....and mark them well on your calendar now...October 30- November 1, 1987. You can help make this convention the biggest and the best....by your being there.

Don't miss the convention!

Mark Your Calendar...

**COALITION
OF TEXANS
WITH DISABILITIES**



Houston Hosts
**TENTH ANNUAL
CTD CONVENTION**

★ ★ ★ A DECADE OF DISABILITY
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October 30 - November 1, 1987

* *Holiday Inn*
HOBBY AIRPORT

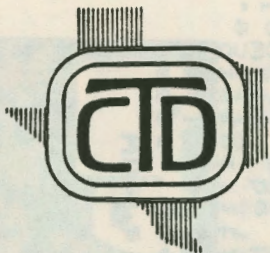
For Information Contact:

CTD Annual Convention

P.O. Box 4709

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Come join us at our
Open House
Friday, August 7, 1987
3-6 pm

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