



News

SEPTEMBER, 1986



SUNSET COMMISSION TO TAKE PUBLIC COMMENT

After months of research and meetings with concerned organizations and other members of the community, the Sunset Commission will hold public hearings on Friday September 26th and Saturday September 27th on the Sunset staff's recommendations for the Texas Department of Human Services (TDHS) and Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation Authority (TDMHRA)

Both of these agencies are large and have many controversial issues that, depending on what recommendations are made, will have long-term affects on disabled people. Many CTD organizations have expressed concern over the way TDHS provides service to persons with disabilities. Recommendations made by the Sunset staff could affect the way this is done in the future.

Another major issue that will be addressed in the report on TDMHMR is that of regionalization. How should TDMHMR be administratively structured to best deliver services? Should the present system remain or should a new structure be implemented will be addressed in the Sunset Report.

If you want to have a copy of the report sent to you call the Sunset Commission at (512)463-1300.

ENSURING THE RIGHTS OF THE INSURED

Public Citizen, a consumer advocacy group is in need of your help. We are looking for those whose disability is the result of an accident caused by another or a defective product.

The insurance industry has initiated a media blitz to try and convince the public and the state legislature of the need for tort reform. Tort law is that system which allows compensation for damages and injuries suffered because of negligence and misconduct of others. The reforms the insurance industry suggests further injure the disabled person, in making it more difficult to recover damages by placing caps on the amount of recovery.

If you have been injured and/or would like to preserve the rights of others to recover through the court system, then please contact Tom Smith and Jessica Shahin at Public Citizen, 1611 E 1st, Austin, Texas 78702-4455 or phone 512/477-1155.



DISABLED AND ABLE TO VOTE



This year is a historic one in terms of voting rights for disabled Texans. Both state and federal voting rights laws come into effect this year. Also, efforts to register disabled voters, which began here in Texas, among other places, are being adopted and promoted nationally. In many local communities around our state, groups and individuals have started campaigns to register and mobilize voters with disabilities.

There are many critical decisions being made by our government (at both state and federal levels) which will affect the lives of literally millions of disabled citizens. You need to get involved. CTD keeps you informed, but if you do not take action the information is useless.

The deadline to register to vote in the November 1986 election is October 3rd. Are you registered to vote? If you are not sure or want to register, call your County Tax Assessor-Collector. You can register by mail!



FEDERAL BITS AND PIECES

Proposed tax reform legislation is up for a final vote by the House-Senate Conference Committee any date now. Changes which will affect disabled persons include: increase in medical expense deduction from 5% of adjusted gross income to 7.5%. The double exemption for elderly and blind persons would not be allowed, but these persons would be allowed additional deductions of \$750 and \$600 respectively for single and married non-itemizers.

The Senate Appropriations Committee has decided to cut funding for Low Income Home Energy (LIHEAP) by \$135 million. Unless the cut is restored in the FY 1987 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill, 700,000 low-income families nation-wide will be denied services, and only 13% of those eligible are served now. The House version provides for full funding of LIHEAP.

HR 4300, the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1986 would provide some job protection to employees who became seriously ill or who have family caregiving responsibilities.

On August 9th the United States Senate confirmed the appointment of Justin W. Dart Jr. as Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration. Dart will be sworn in in early September.

Tax deduction for removal of architectural barriers in public facilities and for business transportation vehicles has been reinstated for two more years. Deductions up to \$35,000 annually may be made for certain projects. Call CTD for address and phone to obtain IRS standards.

TO: CTD Board Members
FROM: Jim Parker, Membership Chairman
RE: New Organizational Members

Hola! y greetings from El Paso:

?Que paso?

As you know we are drawing closer to the 9th Annual CTD delegate convention in "Big D" and I would like to see all of us make a strong push to draw in new organizational members for 1986.

There are many reasons for wanting new member groups, the least of which is the Texas legislature will be in session in 1987, following two (so far) special sessions to deal with the budget crisis. For disabled people to have a strong voice in advocating for continued improvement in a pathetic monetary outlay for services for elderly, disabled and poor people, we must strengthen our forces and plan our direction.

So, please take a small bit of time from your day or week and contact organizations in your area and spill your understanding of CTD and its work for disabled Texans at the Federal, State and Local levels. Currently, we have a strong, consistant voice through the efforts of our advocates in Austin at the State level, and to continue to do so we must double our efforts locally to provide new "blood" from which to draw energy, ideas and numbers.

Let's make a commitment to ourselves, disabled Texans and CTD to approach and recruit, at least one new organizational member prior to the October convention!

See you in "Big D"!!!



Jim Parker



THERE'S STILL TIME TO REGISTER for the CTD Ninth Annual Convention in Dallas, Texas October 17-19, 1986. The theme of this years convention is "The Political Process: Using it for Change." The convention agenda is filled with informative speakers and interesting workshops. Resolutions will be considered and members will be elected to the CTD Board of Directors. The key to the success of the Annual Convention is your participation. Register today! Contact the CTD Central office for more information. 512/443-8252.

CALL FOR CONVENTION BIDS

CTD is looking for a member organization to host our 10th Annual Convention. If your organization is interested in assisting in putting on our 1987 convention. Please let us know in the State office and we will give you more specifics. We would like to have our location announced at this year's convention in Dallas.

Employment Opportunities



The Coalition of Texans with Disabilities will be filling six positions for the Statewide Independent Living Advocacy Program in the coming months. One position, ILC Outreach Organizer, will work out of the CTD Central Office while the other five positions, ILC Outreach workers will each be located in the cities with Independent Living Centers. Job descriptions are available from CTD. For more information contact Jean Langendorf at 512/443-8252.

"ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES: A PRACTICAL APPROACH"

A conference sponsored by the American Public Welfare Association will be held in San Antonio October 14-17 at the Convention Center and Marriot Hotel. Workshop topics cover legal, counseling, ethical, cultural and volunteer issues.

For more information contact: Sharon Pinkston
P.O. Box 37120
San Antonio, Texas 78237
512/531-1312

Registration cut off 9/25/86 - \$100.00



OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL:

A TEXAS TRADITION

TACLD Celebrates the Sequicentennial, 22nd Annual Conference, Texas Association for Children and Adults With Learning Disabilities. November 6-8, 1986. Kahler Green Oaks Inn & Conference Center, Fort Worth, Texas.

The Conference provides speakers and workshops to help Teachers and Parents to improve their understanding and knowledge of the social and academic needs of the Learning Disabled (LD) child or adult.

For additional information contact:

Conference Chairman
La Nelle Gallagher
2117 Flat Creek Drive
Richardson, Texas 75080

Or: TACLD State Office
1011 West 31st Street
Austin, Texas 78705
(512)458-8234

COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES HOLDS PUBLIC HEARING ON LEGISLATIVE MATTERS

The Council on Disabilities will hold a public hearing on September 26, 1986 to hear legislative proposals and concerns from consumer advocacy groups concerned with citizens with disabilities. The hearing will begin at 9:00 a.m. at the Cris Cole Center Auditorium, 4800 North Lamar, Austin, Texas. For more information contact Scott Bowman 512/459-2650.

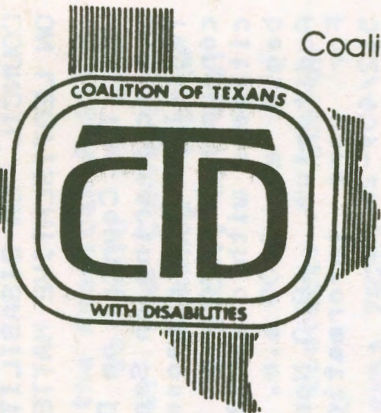
If your organization is unable to appear in person, please send any written legislative proposals or concerns to Terry Reed Goodman, Council on Disabilities, P.O. Box 12428, Austin, Texas 78711.



WANTED: HISTORY ON TEXANS WITH DISABILITIES

The Council on Disabilities Sesquicentennial Task Force Plans to print a brochure on the contributions of Texans with disabilities as part of the Sesquicentennial celebration. If you know of any Texan with a disability who played a major role in shaping this state or the nation in the past 150 years, please write and tell us. Send the name, birthdate, disability and historical contribution to: Susan Nixon, Texas School for the Deaf, P.O. Box 3538, Austin, Texas 78764, (512) 440-5335 (V or TDD). Please include your name and address so we can acknowledge your contribution or contact you for further information.

Also, December 13th has been designated Sesquicentennial Day for disabled Texans by the Council on Disabilities. The Council is arranging festivities which will focus on the accomplishments of disabled Texans. The activities will be held at the Capitol. For details contact Scott Bowman, TCB, (512) 477-1155.



Coalition of Texans with Disabilities
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Austin, Texas 78765

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**20 MILLION
AMERICANS
DISABLED
AND ABLE TO
VOTE**