

**Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities
Legislative and Budget Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes**

Date of meeting: Monday, May 13, 2024

Start time: 12:00pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Members Participating Remotely	
1	Carl Richardson – ADA Coordinator, Massachusetts State House
2	Charlie Carr – Legislative Liaison, Disability Policy Consortium
3	Chris White – CEO & President, Road to Responsibility, Inc.
Members Absent	
4	Meghan Todd – Grants Manager, City of Framingham

Action Items		Person Responsible
1	Reach out to Disability Law Center regarding Voting Rights discussion	Carl Richardson
2	Reach out to Disability Policy Consortium regarding Health Equity	Charlie Carr
3	Subcommittee members to join Workforce Supports Meeting on July 11 th	All

Agenda

1. Welcome, Roll Call, Approval of February and April Minutes
 - Motion to approve the meeting minutes, approved by all members.
2. Guest Speakers Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities
Senator Robyn Kennedy and Representative Jay Livingstone
 - Background on the Disability Caucus by Charlie Carr:
 - Senator Barrett and Representative Provost previously led the Disability Caucus, creating a valuable forum for the community to present their work on disability-related issues. This platform allowed legislators to provide feedback and highlight their legislative priorities, benefiting everyone involved. Staff and aides also participated, enriching the discussions. We hope to revive the Disability Caucus and re-engage legislators in this important initiative.
 - Updates on pending legislation discussion
 - Senator Robyn Kennedy:
 - Committed to collaboration with SPD.
 - The Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities has received a multitude of bills.

➔ Out of these, 176 bills have progressed to the next phase, with some requiring further work in upcoming years and sessions.

- Grateful for ongoing discussions with Charlie about restarting the legislative caucus.
- Recognizes the significant partnership opportunities the caucus presents.
- Reviving the caucus is a priority in my meetings with Senate President Spilka, depending on this fall's results.
- The committee's work aligns well with my professional background at the Executive Office of Health and Human Services and my experience as Deputy Chief of Staff for Lieutenant Governor Murray, focusing on connecting providers with resources to best serve their communities.
- Representative Jay Livingstone:
 - Successfully moved several bills that are expected to pass this term or become law.
 - Expressed gratitude to Carl for his exceptional work in making committee hearings accessible to the community.
 - Dedicated to ensuring the community has a voice and can participate in the legislative process.
 - Set the gold standard for accessible committee hearings, thanks to Carl's efforts.
 - Aiming to make the Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities more productive.
 - Collaborated with Senator Kennedy to pass the first bill in the House, a bill that had been pending for about 15 years, and is hopeful it will become law this term.
- Carl: You mentioned that 176 bills were submitted to your committee this year. While our Commission cannot endorse legislation, we are eager to collaborate with the Joint Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities to stay informed about these bills and educate the disability community.
 - As the legislative and budget subcommittee, we aim to act as a clearinghouse, helping everyone understand the pros and cons of each bill. Could we explore ways to work with your committee next session to share information about these bills and promote awareness within the disability community?
- Sen. Kennedy:
 - Yes! We can collaborate with our researchers, have organizations testify together, and ensure that the bills align properly. Even straightforward bills have pros and cons, and we want to work with this committee to understand both sides. By partnering throughout

the process, we aim to reach a point where we can successfully move bills forward.

- Rep. Livingstone:
 - It's crucial to dissect a bill and recognize that pending legislation exists and other vehicles coin got of other committees. The most helpful approach is to identify the problems that need solving within the community. We should define the issue clearly and set specific goals to address it.
- Charlie would like to address the following:
 - Estate Recovery Bill
 - Personal Care Attendant (PCA) Program
 - Health Equity Bill
 - These issues are among the key focuses for the Disability Legislative Caucus. We are considering holding quarterly meetings to address them, aiming to keep the time commitment minimal for all participants.
- Senator Kennedy:
 - We share concerns about the drastic cuts to the PCA program. Both the House and Senate have reinstated the funding for PCAs.
 - The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is planning to restructure the Personal Care Management (PCM) determination infrastructure for the state. There are concerns that the RFR was put out without robust feedback from providers and what the impacts could be.
 - ➔ Through this amendment, we urged the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) to slow down their process, and they have been very responsive.
 - ➔ The Senate Ways and Means budget includes the creation of a commission to evaluate the PCA program for long-term sustainability.
 - It would be helpful for this Commission to understand what the problems are and what the solution should be.
- Chris: currently, our biggest issue has been with the PCA cuts. Thrilled that those be restored in both budgets.
- Carl: what are the next steps for commission and you both in creating the disability caucus:
 - Rep. Livingstone: we have a handful of bills left in our committee, two deal with DCF issue and one with the [Supported Decision-Making bill](#). If there are bills that are pending in Ways and Means and our Commission is interested in, they are happy to discuss those with us.
- Charlie: giving time to the legislators regarding the disability caucus.
- Carl: ask other commission members to join the legislative and budget subcommittee.

- Imene suggested that this subcommittee join the Workforce Supports meeting with Patricia Yu, Senior Director of Healthcare Workforce Policy at EOHHS, in July. The discussion will focus on the root causes of issues related to the PCA program, as highlighted by Senator Kennedy. Subcommittee members agreed.

Next Meeting Dates

- 7/8/24 at 12pm
- 8/26/24 at 10am
- 11/18/24 at 10am