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WEBSITE:www.sd-ccd.org**87th Legislative Session Opens
January 10, 2012**

This year's legislative session will open on Tuesday, January 10th, at 12 noon (Central Standard Time - CST). The thirty-fifth legislative day is scheduled for Monday, March 19th. The FY13 Budget will be a large part of the Legislature's work during this upcoming session. Quoting from the South Dakota Budget Primer, produced by the South Dakota Budget and Policy Project,

"The state budget is the ultimate policy document. It determines how much is spent on programs and services that affect the lives of all South Dakotans. Our schools, health, safety and transportation - and the basic public systems that support them - the foundation of South Dakota's current and future prosperity..."

"Small changes in a budget or fiscal policy can have major impacts on the people in our state. These changes may not attract public attention, leaving most South Dakotans unaware of their effect. Broad-based and thoughtful citizen involvement helps ensure that South Dakota's budget priorities reflect our values and that our budget decisions meet the needs of the state."

The Coalition will again be busy throughout session monitoring legislative activity - not only as it relates to the FY13 budget, but as it relates to other bills that will surface. We will be monitoring all legislative activity. To give you a sense of what that means, during the last five legislative sessions, the House of Representatives has introduced between 256 and 321 bills each session. During that same time frame, the Senate has introduced between 458 and 531 bills in one year. We expect that the 87th Session activity will lean towards the high end of these previous years' numbers.

The Coalition is committed to providing you with current updates on the activity of the 87th Legislative Session. We will once again work to provide a daily update on specific bills introduced on both sides. We will also work to provide you with the latest on opportunities to be involved in these conversations, at both the local and state levels.

To learn more about our work during session, we invite you to go to our website at www.sd-ccd.org and click on "public policy." We also invite you to email us at shellyp@sd-ccd.org.

Remember - broad-based and thoughtful citizen involvement helps ensure that South Dakota's leaders make decisions that meet the needs of all citizens.

iPad Voting Rolls Out For Some Oregonians

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SALEM, OR – Oregon was first in the nation to have all residents vote by mail. Now it's pioneering another idea: vote by iPad.

Voters in five counties are filling out and returning their mail-in ballots for a Tuesday special primary election to replace former U.S. Rep. David Wu, who resigned following a sex scandal. A handful will mark their ballots not with a pen but with the tip of their finger.

It's the latest attempt at using new technology to help voters with disabilities cast ballots privately.

Armed with iPads and portable printers, county election workers are going to parks, nursing homes, community centers and anywhere else they might find groups of voters who have trouble filling out traditional paper ballots.

Using iPad, disabled voters can call up the right ballot and tap the screen to pick a candidate, with or without the help of election workers. The voters then print the completed ballot and stuff it in an envelope to sign, take with them and drop in the mail or an official ballot box.

Voters with poor vision can adjust the font size and screen colors, or they can have the iPad read them the candidates' names and even the voter pamphlet. A voter with limited mobility could attach a "sip-and-puff" device to control the screen. Lewis Crews, 75, who has severe arthritis, didn't have to hold a pen to fill out his ballot.

"It's a lot simpler for me. I think it's a great setup they got," Crews told The Associated Press last week in a phone interview after he filled out and printed one of the first-ever iPad ballots.

Election officials helped Crew operate the iPad, he said, "but now that I've seen how it works I'm confident I can do it on my own."

State election officials say they'll use the same system in the special general election in January. And if the pilot project is successful, they'll make the service available across the state. They believe Oregon is the first state to try using iPads to mark ballots.

Oregon officials decided to try iPads because their other equipment for helping disabled people vote is nearing the end of its life. The old tools, including laptops with various accessibility modifications, were hauled around in two suitcases and were difficult for election workers to set up.

About 800 voters used it in 2010, according to the secretary of state's office.

Officials hope the iPad's portability, simplicity and relatively low cost will make it easier to deploy to more places and reach more voters. People with their own accessibility tools like joysticks and paddles can connect them using Bluetooth wireless technology.

"Some people want to vote independently, and they're the ones that we're talking to," said Steve Trout, state elections director. "Others just want someone to help them, and that's fine too."

Apple Inc., which makes the iPad, has donated five of the devices for the experiment, and the state spent about \$75,000 to develop the software. Oregon would need at least 72 iPads, per county, to bring the program statewide, Trout said.

At \$500 each, the state could buy iPads for about \$36,000 to maintain accessible voting tools.

Elections officials emphasize that, technically speaking, nobody is voting by iPad. Rather they're using the device to mark a ballot that's dispensed from a portable printer and mailed to election offices for counting, just like a hand-marked ballot.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK....

Dear Fellow Members,

Just a couple, three, four thoughts -

First of all, I want to say a big thank you to all of you who brought a new member to SDCCD during the November - December membership contest. (The names of the winners of the \$100 prizes will be named the first week in January.)

The membership drive was important for two reasons. It helped as a fundraising opportunity, but more importantly, it gave each of us a chance to remember why we are members and share that knowledge with others. Reasons like SDCCD was founded as a cross-disability rights organization that gave us a voice for our concerns; a place where we could get information regarding laws, legislative issues, available programs and services, referral information, etc.; a place for networking with others who have the same concerns. It is still that and much more.

Two dates are coming up that are important to us - the first is January 10th - the opening of the 2012 Legislative Session. As always there will be bills offered affecting people with disabilities and their families. I ask that you stay informed on the issues as they arise. If you don't know a bill or have other questions regarding them, please contact our staff. They are on it daily, if not hourly, and will be glad to help.

The second day is February 22nd - Disability Awareness Day at the Capitol. We invite you to come visit with your local senators and representatives and others about your concerns. There is no better person to educate them than you.

One of the things that came out of the Disability Advocacy Network follow-up meeting with Governor Daugaard and his staff was that he wants to hear from people with disabilities and their families themselves. Not providers, but people who receive services or need assistance NOW. So, I am asking that you write or tell your story, your needs, your thoughts to the Governor and his staff. Or if you'd be more comfortable sharing them with our staff, they will be sure to forward them onto Governor Daugaard and his staff.

Lastly, I would wish for you that 2012 be everything you want it to be!

Until next time,
Margot

Executive Director's Thoughts

The arrival of a new year seems like a good time to look back, reflect and look ahead. **Equality** is the goal our founders, and those who followed them, worked to secure for South Dakotans with disabilities and their families. And we continue to work towards that goal.

During the last two months of 2011, we challenged each of our members to recruit one new member. Our goal was to double our membership by the end of the year. We didn't reach that goal, but we did grow our membership by 20% and for that growth we thank those who joined and those who recruited them. We set this goal so we would have a louder voice for change - politically, economically and socially. We've made progress towards that end. During this new year we will continue to invite and recruit new members - with a goal of making our collective voice even stronger.

A challenge was made to our Board of Directors and Staff in 2011 to make a financial commitment in support of the organization. We felt strongly that if we are asking others to support our work, we must be willing to do the same. We are approaching 100% of our board and staff having made a commitment. And for that and much more, we say "thank you!"

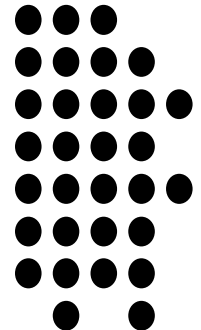
One of our goals has been, and continues to be, to move the Coalition down a path to having a sound financial base. We are grateful for past opportunities, and we look forward to future opportunities. We also know that with a solid and diverse fiscal foundation, we can do ten times more than we are presently doing. So we are exploring new avenues of financial support that will help us on our journey to a sound fiscal foundation for today and the future.

Throughout 2012 we will continue our efforts to ensure that people with disabilities are equally involved in all aspects of the political system. We will continue to work for employment opportunities that will lead to economic equality for people with disabilities. We will continue to challenge attitudinal barriers that limit access and opportunities for people with disabilities.

This year will bring challenges and opportunities to us as individuals and as an organization. Our economy remains unsettled, another legislative session starts soon, a presidential election lies ahead, the U.S. Supreme Court will render a critical decision on healthcare reform - things we know and much more that we do not know. Whatever 2012 brings our way, by joining our voices together we will continue to move towards equality for all.

Thank you for all your efforts during the past year. Thank you for your support, involvement and commitment. Thank you, in advance, for all that you will do during this coming year. Our tenacity, perseverance and determination have brought us this far, and it will carry us to the next level of success!

Shelly



Appropriations Committee Hearing Schedule

The budget hearings of the Joint Appropriations Committee have been scheduled for the 87th Legislative Session. Some that are followed closely by South Dakotans with disabilities and their families are those for the Departments of Social Services, Human Services and Education.

Presently the Joint Appropriations Committee hearings for these departments are scheduled for: Friday, January 13th – Department of Social Services; Friday, January 20th – Department of Human Services; and Tuesday, January 24th – Department of Education.

This schedule is subject to revision, so to see the most recent schedule or to see when other departments are scheduled to appear before the Joint Appropriations Committee, go to: <http://legis.state.sd.us/sessions/2012/AppropriationsMeetingSchedule>.

iPad Voting Rolls Out For Some Oregonians

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Federal law requires that people with disabilities have the same opportunity for access and participation in the voting process, including privacy and independence. That means polling places have to be accessible, and elections officials have to make accessible voting equipment available.

Curt Decker, director of the National Disability Rights Network, a Washington-based lobby group, said he's concerned that Oregon's iPad plan still relies on a paper ballot. Visually impaired voters won't be able to tell if the printout matches their selections. Election officials say the iPad can read back the voters' selections before the ballot is printed.

"Any time you start using paper, then people who are blind can't see it, and they would need

assistance. That's what we're trying to get away from." Decker said. "People with disabilities should be able to vote independently and privately. That is our goal."

Social Security Beneficiary Small Group Training Available

Are you a member of a peer support group or a member of a local chapter of a disability organization? Do you receive Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income? If so, there is a new opportunity to learn more about the benefits you receive and the impact employment may have on them.

Freedom to Work Project staff have developed two separate training packages – one for beneficiaries of Social Security Disability Insurance and another one for beneficiaries of Supplemental Security Income. These trainings are designed for groups of no more than 10 people. They are also designed to not take more than an hour and a half to complete, including time for questions and answers at the end.

If you and a group of which you are a part would like to take advantage of these training opportunities, please contact Shelly Pfaff at 1.800.210.0143 or at shellyp@sd-ccd.org. You are also invited to contact Shelly with any questions you may have about this training.

To Contact State Legislators by Letter, Fax or Phone

Write: Senator or Representative
500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

Fax: Senator or Representative
(must identify specific legislator)
(605) 773-6806

Call: Messages for Senators
(605) 773-3821
Messages for Representatives
(605) 773-3851