

# Public Policy Update

December 10, 2010

From Steve Larson, Public Policy Director



## ➤ Governor-Elect Dayton

On Wednesday December 8<sup>th</sup>, Representative Emmer conceded the gubernatorial election to Senator Dayton. Governor-Elect Dayton is now putting his transition team together and is actively recruiting for key positions in his new administration. He has already asked Tom Sorel to continue as Transportation Commissioner, and next week he could announce commissioners for several other state departments.



You can still provide ideas and suggestions for the new Governor as he forms his budget and policies for the 2011 Legislative Session. Go to [www.daytontransition.org](http://www.daytontransition.org); and click on the “Share Your Ideas” section. In the last Public Policy Update, we provided the following messages you can communicate to him:

- ***Protect and maintain a strong community-based system to support individuals with disabilities and their families.***
- ***Support innovations in disability supports that create better lives for people with disabilities, often cost fewer state dollars, and help reduce the deficit.***
- ***Include increased revenues as part of any budget solution so we have adequate revenues to fund disability supports.***

## ➤ Come to Disability Matters Day at the Capitol – We Need You There

We need your help more than ever this Legislative Session, and we need your presence and voice at our Disability Matters Day at the Capitol on January 25! Health and human services and education make up about 70% of the state budget, and they could be targeted for unprecedented cuts. We must be prepared to strongly advocate for services and supports for persons with disabilities, and Disability Day at the Capitol is one chance to raise your many voices together. A flyer with more info will be ready soon.



The event is free, but you’ll have to provide your own lunch. Here’s what you be able to do on January 25:

- **Learn about key legislative issues at a legislative briefing.** In addition to information on the importance of protecting disability supports, we’ll provide educational materials that include many of our priorities, such as transforming the system towards greater control over services and greater choice in housing, and more cost-effective ways of providing services. We will also promote anti-bullying legislation to protect students with disabilities in our schools.

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- **Join countless other advocates at a noon rally in the Capitol Rotunda.**
- **Visit your newly-elected legislators at your convenience.**
- **Educate legislators about how important disability programs and services are to you.** In addition to the legislative briefings, we will have fact sheets and other materials to assist you in your visits.

### ➤ *State Forecast and the State Budget Deficit*

On December 2nd, the state Office of Management and Budget announced the budget forecast for the upcoming session. The forecast showed that Minnesota will face a \$6.2 billion budget deficit for the biennium starting July 1, 2011 and ending June 30, 2013. For our current budget cycle, the state will have a slight surplus through June 30, 2011.

Upon taking office on January 3rd, Governor-Elect Dayton said he will request \$1.4 billion from the federal government to allow low-income Minnesotans, many of whom were previously on General Assistance Medical Care, to access Medical Assistance. This will help with the projected budget deficit.

Governor-Elect Dayton and his team will immediately review the draft budgets prepared by all state departments, make changes to reflect his priorities, and submit his proposed budget to the Legislature by February 15th.

### ➤ *St. Cloud Town Hall Forum A Success*

On Thursday December 9<sup>th</sup>, Arc Midstate co-hosted a town hall forum with other local partners. Attending the forum were Representatives Steve Gottwalt (St. Cloud) and Larry Hosch (St. Joseph) and Representative-Elect King Banaian (St. Cloud). Individuals with disabilities and their family members shared stories about PCA services, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, brain injuries, Consumer Directed Community Supports, and parental fees.

Rep. Gottwalt has been named Chair of the House Health and Human Services Reform Committee, and Rep. Hosch said he plans to serve on that committee. They will play key roles in developing the Health and Human Services budget.

Arc Southeastern Minnesota met with several legislators at its office on Monday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, updating them on our issues for the 2011 legislative session. Arc Greater Twin Cities has scheduled a town hall forum in Roseville for the evening of Thursday, January 13<sup>th</sup>.

### ➤ *Legislative Committee Schedules Announced*

The Minnesota Senate and House have set their committee schedules for the 2011 Legislative Session. Go to [www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hinfo/11comgrid.pdf](http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/hinfo/11comgrid.pdf) to find the House schedule. The Senate schedule is attached to this e-mail.

The 2011 Legislature will convene at noon on Tuesday, January 4<sup>th</sup>. We are already preparing for the upcoming session. We have started making appointments with key committee chairs to discuss issues impacting persons with disabilities.

