

## ➤ *Shutdown Update: No Budget, Uncertainty Continues*

As of this writing, Governor Dayton and the Legislature still had not reached agreement on a state budget for the next two years. They have met daily since last Friday, June 24, and will meet again this afternoon. Some meetings have lasted all day; others have lasted barely an hour. The areas of disagreement continue to be the level of overall state spending (the Legislature wants to spend \$34 billion, the Governor wants about \$35.8 billion), new revenues (the Governor wants \$1.8 billion in new revenues, legislative leaders oppose any new taxes), and spending levels in specific bills (the Governor wants fewer cuts than legislative leaders).

If a government shutdown occurs on July 1st, it is still not clear what services will be considered “essential” and therefore continued during the shutdown, including disability services. Ramsey County Judge Kathleen Gearin heard petitions from a number of parties last Thursday. However, she hasn’t issued her decision yet about which services would be essential or if one individual should be given the power to decide what is essential. Judge Gearin had said that if this decision making power is assigned to any one individual or entity, she believes the scope of this decision making power should be much more limited than it was in the 2005 shutdown. We will keep you posted on any developments as they occur.

## ➤ *Tell Congress: Protect Medicaid, the Lifeline for People with Disabilities*

**We must act quickly to protect the federal Medicaid program.**

Medicaid is the lifeline for people with disabilities. Please respond to the alert we posted yesterday, contact U.S. Senators Franken and Klobuchar and your U.S. House Representative, and attend any town meetings representatives and senators have scheduled while they are home for the July 4th Congressional recess. Many proposals are being discussed in Washington to balance the budget. What they all have in common is that Medicaid spending would be dramatically cut in a short period of time. This would be devastating for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. We expect that in July, Congress will consider a proposal to raise the federal debt ceiling that will include drastic cuts to Medicaid. See [the attached alert](#) for more information and for what you can do.



*DON'T CUT OUR  
LIFELINE*

## ➤ *Settlement Reached in (METO) Lawsuit*

On June 23<sup>rd</sup> a settlement was reached on behalf of three former residents of Minnesota Extended Treatment Options (METO). ([See link on our website](#)). In September 2008 the Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities issued a report titled [“Just Plain Wrong”](#) sighting many instances of the illegal use of restraints, including handcuffs, at METO. The report alerted the public to these wrongs and ultimately led to a lawsuit against METO on behalf of three former METO residents in July 2009.

In addition to a financial settlement with the plaintiffs and others who were parties to the class action suit (i.e., former METO residents who were also abused), the state agreed to form key committees to review and update Rule 40 (the state rule on using aversive procedures). It will also develop a Minnesota Olmstead Plan which will address barriers to individuals who want to move from institutions to the community. The Arc Minnesota will seek to be actively involved in both of these endeavors.

## ➤ *Charlie Lakin Accepts Position with Federal Government*



Charlie Lakin, Director of the Research and Training Center (RTC) on Community Living at the University of Minnesota, has accepted a position with the U.S. Department of Education effective August 29, 2011. Charlie will be the Director of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. He is nationally recognized and respected for his research on community-based services for people with developmental disabilities.

Charlie has also been a long time supporter of The Arc. He has been a board member of The Arc, The Arc Minnesota, and The Arc Greater Twin Cities, and he has been honored many times for that service. He received a Special Board Award from The Arc Minnesota in 1996, honors at our 2006 Public Policy Recognition Dinner for his service and commitment to people with disabilities, and The Arc Research Matters Award in 2010.

Charlie will be greatly missed by the RTC, The Arc, and the Minnesota disability community at large, but he will be a great asset to the national disability community in his new position. Congrats, Charlie!

## ➤ *Media Coverage on State Budget Cuts and The Harm They Cause*

The Arc Minnesota reached out to the media to publicize the results of the report “Still in the Shadows with a Future Uncertain”. The results from a nationwide survey conducted by The Arc showed families experiencing increased stress, isolation, and uncertainty as a result of state and federal budget cuts

Jean Bender and I were interviewed on WCCO Radio on June 23rd to discuss the report. Two Twin Cities TV stations also broadcast stories -- [KARE 11 TV](#) on June 15 and [Brooklyn Park Cable Access Channel 12](#) on June 16.

The Arc Minnesota also worked strategically with local chapters of The Arc and media across the state throughout the 2011 Legislative Session to raise the visibility of legislation impacting persons with disabilities. Listed below are the news conferences and coverage in Greater Minnesota since the beginning of June. At each of these news conferences, members of The Arc shared their stories with the media about the potential impacts of proposed cuts to services and supports for persons with disabilities:

- On Friday June 17<sup>th</sup> The Arc Kandiyohi County hosted a news conference, with coverage provided by the *West Central Tribune* and Willmar radio station KWLM.
- On Saturday June 18<sup>th</sup> The Arc West Central held its news conference at the Moorhead Library, which was covered by three TV stations. In addition, State Senator Keith Langseth attended and commented on the pending state government shutdown.
- On Friday June 24<sup>th</sup> The Arc Southeastern Minnesota, Home and Community Options (HCO), Winona DAC, and Winona ORC co-hosted a news conference at the HCO offices. The *Winona Post* newspaper and Winona area radio stations covered the event. State Senator Jeremy Miller attended the news conference, then met afterwards with some key community leaders and disability advocates to discuss our services and supports.

## ➤ *Disability Law Center Wants to Talk With Those Losing PCA Services*

The Minnesota Disability Law Center (MDLC) wants to hear from families who will be cut off of PCA services starting July 1 because of the new PCA eligibility criteria of needing assistance with two activities of daily living (ADLs). Clients would be those assessed at needing help with only one ADL, or those who have Level 1 behavior but less than 2 ADLs. If you know of people fitting these profiles, ask them to call Patricia Siebert at the MDLC, 612-746-3734.