

In the classroom:

HB1568 – Restraint and Seclusion -- Representative Dottie Bailey

This bill places limits on the use of restraint and seclusion in public schools. Students with disabilities are especially at risk for being restrained and/or separated from the regular classroom. This can be traumatizing for students, and contributes to poor educational outcomes. If you agree there should be limits on restraint and seclusion or have personally experienced restraint and seclusion, you may want to consider sharing your story or asking your legislator to support this bill.

HB1540 – Recording IEPs -- Representative Chuck Basye

This bill allows parents to record IEP meetings for students with disabilities. Because the meetings can be long and difficult to process, recording the meetings would enable parents to go back and review what was discussed. If you agree parents should be able to record IEP meetings, you may want to consider asking your legislator to support this bill.

In the workplace:

HB1276 – Employment First -- Representative Sarah Unsicker

This bill makes Missouri an “Employment First” state – like 23 other states so far. It requires all state agencies that support people with disabilities to make competitive employment a priority for people with disabilities who want to work. This bill hasn’t yet been referred to a committee. If you agree with making employment a priority, you may want to consider sharing your personal story about work and employment and/or ask your legislator to help move this bill forward.

SB629 – Ticket to Work -- Senator Scott Sifton

This bill updates the Ticket to Work Health Assurance Program to allow people with disabilities to earn more than 100% of poverty level and keep their Medicaid benefits by paying a premium based on their income. It makes several other updates to the program, including the exclusion of retirement accounts in the asset limit calculations, updates to the income calculations, increases disregarded amount, as well as disregards a portion of spousal income when determining eligibility. If you agree with these improvements, you may want to consider asking your legislator to support this bill.

General Points – Funding Employment Services:

Most Missourians with disabilities are either unemployed or underemployed. By supporting full funding of employment support services provided by DMH Division of Developmental Disabilities and DESE Division of Vocational rehabilitation, legislators can help increase the number of people with disabilities at work. If you’d like your legislator to help increase the number of people with disabilities, consider sharing your employment story and asking your legislator to support full funding of employment services provided by DMH Division of DD.

In the community:

HB2010 – Funding Home and Community Based Services -- Representative Cody Smith

This is a budget bill that funds support services provided by DMH Division of Developmental Disabilities for people with developmental disabilities at home and in the community. Increases in Section 10.410 do two important things: it helps provider agencies increase pay for direct service staff – which helps fill vacancies and reduce turnover, which is a *current crisis in our communities*. There are also dollars to reduce the waiting list for support services, which is currently growing.

Section 10.810 provides dollars to increase rates for services provided through the Department of Health and Senior Services. Adequate funding is critical to adequate community support. Be sure to share your story.