



GO! Bulletin

March 2, 2010

Hello from the Grassroots Oregon Project. The *GO! Bulletin* is a statewide source of updates on issues, events and activities related to people with developmental disabilities. You are receiving this *GO! Bulletin* as a Member of The Oregon Disability Network, a collaborative effort of the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities, and the Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition.

Tuesday, March 2, 2010
URGENT ACTION NEEDED!

CALL CONGRESS: URGE A VOTE - YES FOR H.R. 4247 PREVENTING HARMFUL RESTRAINT & SECLUSION IN SCHOOLS BILL!

Bill moving to House Floor ➔ Call TODAY! Please forward!

This week, the entire House of Representatives will vote on legislation establishing minimum federal standards regarding restraint and seclusion in schools (HR 4247).

Call your Congressional Representative on TODAY and ask them to **VOTE YES to H.R. 4247**. Also tell them to vote against any amendments that will weaken the bill.

Dial 202-224-3121 (TTY 202-225-1904) Ask for your Representative's office. (See instructions below.) Get your friends and family to call TODAY, too!

WHY VOTE YES FOR H.R. 4247?

H.R. 4247 is a bill that will stop schools from restraining children, confining them in seclusion rooms, and using aversive interventions to harm them. *A Government Accountability Office study found hundreds of cases of alleged abuse and death from restraint and seclusion in public and private schools over the last two decades.* Examples included a 7 year old who died after being held face down for hours by school staff; 5 year olds allegedly being tied to chairs with bungee cords and duct tape by their teacher and suffering broken arms and bloody noses; and a 13 year old who hanged himself in a seclusion room after prolonged confinement. The majority of students in the GAO study had disabilities.

H.R. 4247 will create a minimum level of protection for school children that all states must meet or exceed. Currently, almost half of all states have no laws or laws with little protection for children. H.R. 4247 will prohibit restraint and locked seclusion of schoolchildren unless there is an imminent risk of physical injury that less restrictive interventions would not stop. It will forbid using these abusive techniques as punishment and behavior modification, and to deal with educational disruption and the like. Positive behavioral interventions are the appropriate ways to deal with disruptive behavior. H.R. 4247 is designed to encourage schools to use positive interventions and de-escalation, instead of abusive tactics. The bill prohibits schools from using mechanical and chemical restraints or restraints that impede breathing. H.R. 4247 prohibits including restraint and seclusion in IEPs as a planned intervention. The bill bans aversives that harm health and safety, such as using electric shock and denying children food and water or forcing foul substances into their mouths and eyes.

H.R. 4247 will protect all students, whether in private or public school. Many children with disabilities are placed in private schools by school districts and they should not lose vital health and safety protections. Other parents choose to send their children to private school for religious or other reasons; they should not be forced to give up protections from abuse.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CALLING CONGRESS TODAY!

March 2, 2010

Call and ask your Representative to VOTE FOR H.R. 4247, to prevent harmful restraint and seclusion in schools. Also, tell your Representative to vote against any amendments that would weaken the bill. Tell them to pass the bill intact. The full House of Representatives will vote on the bill this week, so call TODAY!

Telephone/TTY: Call your Congressional Representative and Senators at 202-224-3121 (TTY 202-225-1904). This is the switchboard, so you will need to know your Representative's name. When you are connected, ask for the aide who handles education or disability. If you get voicemail, please leave a message. If you cannot reach this aide, tell the person answering the phone that you want the Congressional Representative to vote for the bill. Again, tell them your city or town so they know they represent you.

So, take two minutes and begin your day with a call to Congress!

You can also find **local numbers** and direct dial numbers on your Representative's webpage at <http://www.house.gov>

Email: If you can call, it is extremely important to do so. But if you cannot (due to a disability, inability to use the phone during working hours, etc.), send an email. Go to <http://www.house.gov/writerep> for the House of Representatives. Calls have a much greater impact! Since Congress is voting on the bill this week, please call TODAY if you can!

Find Out Who Your Congressional Representative is: If you do not know who your Congressional Representative is, go to <http://www.house.gov> and put your zip code into the box in the upper left corner. (You usually only need your five digit zip code.)

If you have already contacted Congress about this bill, please do it again. This time, you are asking him/her to vote with the entire House of Representatives to **support H.R. 4247**.

For more information, reference the following links:

<http://edlabor.house.gov/blog/2009/12/preventing-harmful-restraint-a.shtml>

<http://edlabor.house.gov/blog/2010/02/myth-vs-fact-preventing-harmfu.shtml>

GO! Bulletins are published by the Oregon DD Coalition

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The mission of the Oregon DD Coalition is to promote quality service and supports which respectfully further the rights, equality, justice, and inclusion for all Oregonians with developmental disabilities and their families.