

TASK FORCE TALK

Legislative Disabilities Awareness Day

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It's hard to believe that we're looking at summer through the rear view mirror and that the 2018 legislative session will be quickly approaching.

As you may recall in my last column, I shared with you the bills that passed the Assembly in recognition of Legislative Disabilities Awareness Day (LDAD) on May 22nd that focused on addressing disability rights, election reform and emergency preparedness.

The following are remaining bills that passed the Assembly on LDAD that focus on housing, trusts to assist people with disabilities, tax credits and veterans.

These bills include:

A.4818 (Titus) – This bill would allow tenants with physically disabling conditions that affect their mobility a preference in occupying a vacant dwelling unit on a lower floor in the same project operated by the New York City Housing Authority.

A.5931 (Ramos) – This bill would establish the New York State Interagency Coordinating Council for Service-Disabled Veterans, define the powers and duties of the council and require an annual report.

A.6743 (Barrett) – This bill would exclude a special needs trust, established by an individual with disabilities, from the medical assistance eligibility determination for such individual.

A.5175-A (Gottfried) – This bill would require the Department of Health to include information with the eligibility notice to individuals who qualify for the excess income program of the option to participate in a qualifying trust as a means of qualifying for medical assistance.

A.5333 (Weprin) – This bill would provide an incentive for owners of residential buildings to retrofit homes for access for people with disabilities.

A.5950-A (Lavine) – This bill would allow a tax credit for either new or retrofitted principal residences which are universally designed to be accessible and adaptable housing.

We will continue to advocate on behalf of all of our LDAD bills, but we are particularly hopeful for A.4818, A.6743, A.5175-A and A.5950-A as they all passed both the Assembly and Senate this year.

Looking back on this past year, my first as chair of the Task Force on People with Disabilities, I am very proud of the work that we accomplished in such a short amount of time. I am honored to have met and worked with so many accomplished advocates and people with disabilities.

I look forward to the upcoming session where I hope we will continue to build upon the great work of the past year and expand our advocacy at the state level.

As the Task Force always starts to do at this time of year, we ask *Able* readers to reach out to us if you have suggestions to add to our 2018 priority agenda. We firmly believe in the premise of “nothing about us without us,” and urge you to contact us to let us know exactly what is important to you.

Additionally, if you have any questions or concerns on the measures passed on Disabilities Awareness Day, please contact our Task Force office, 518 455-4592.