



## REAUTHORIZATION OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ASSISTANCE AND BILL OF RIGHTS ACT (P.L. 106-402) "DD ACT" 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, Second Session

### NACDD'S MISSION

NACDD's mission is to provide support and assistance to its members – State Councils on Developmental Disabilities, in order to promote a consumer and family-centered system of services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities.

### Definition of a Developmental Disability:

Developmental disabilities are severe, chronic disabilities attributable to mental and/or physical impairment, which manifest before age 22 and are likely to continue indefinitely. They result in substantial limitations in three or more areas: self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living and economic self-sufficiency, as well as the continuous need for individually planned and coordinated services

There are nearly four million Americans living with developmental disabilities.

- *Administration on Developmental Disabilities, January 25, 2002*

### STATE AND TERRITORIAL COUNCILS ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Congress is scheduled to reauthorize the DD Act in 2007.

The *Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act)* is legislation with a rich human service legacy and a long history of bipartisan Congressional support. Originally authorized in 1963, and last reauthorized in 2000, the DD Act focuses on the needs of our most vulnerable United States citizens – the estimated 4.5 million individuals with developmental disabilities. The DD Act ensures that individuals with developmental disabilities participate fully in their communities through full integration and inclusion in the economic, political, social, cultural, religious and educational sectors of our society. State and Territorial Councils on Developmental Disabilities (DD) work to improve the quality of supports and services for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. The DD Act ensures that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the design of and have access to culturally competent services, supports and other assistance and opportunities that promote independence, productivity, integration and inclusion in the community.

### DD ACT PROGRAMS: BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

#### State and Territorial Councils on Developmental Disabilities

In the 1970 reauthorization of the DD Act, Congress recognized the need for strengthening State efforts to coordinate and integrate services for individuals with developmental disabilities. As a result, Congress established and authorized funding for *State Developmental Disabilities Councils* (DD Councils) in each State and Territory. A key mission of Councils is to advise Governors and State agencies on the use of available and potential resources to meet the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities. State DD Councils also engage in advocacy, build capacity and work to affect change and enhance systems to contribute to a coordinated, consumer-directed and family-centered array of community services, individualized supports and other forms of assistance. Their work allows individuals with developmental disabilities to exercise self-determination and live in their communities.

For more information about NACDD's recommendations for DD Act Reauthorization, or to learn more about the key activities of a specific State Developmental Disabilities Council, please contact Anne P. Rohall, Director, Government Relations, NACDD: (703) 739-4400, ext. 4 or [arohall@nacdd.org](mailto:arohall@nacdd.org)

## DD ACT PROGRAMS: BACKGROUND AND HISTORY (CONT)

### UCEDDS

Earlier versions of the DD Act focused primarily on federally-funded, interdisciplinary training programs for professionals who work with individuals with developmental disabilities. In the 2000 reauthorization of the DD Act, these programs became *University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (UCEDDs)*.

### Protection and Advocacy Systems

In 1975, Congress created and authorized funding for *Protection and Advocacy Systems (P & As)* in each State and Territory to ensure the safety and well being of individuals with developmental disabilities, to protect them from abuse and neglect, and to ensure their human and civil rights.

### Projects of National Significance

The 1975 reauthorization of the DD Act also established and authorized funding for *Projects of National Significance (PNS)* to address particular national needs. Examples of current project areas include: Administration on Developmental Disabilities web and family support programs, child care, education and early intervention, employment, family support, health, housing, Medicaid, quality assurance, recreation, self-determination and transportation.

### Family Support Programs

Title II of the DD Act authorizes the *Family Support Program*. The Family Support Program is intended to promote and strengthen the implementation of comprehensive State systems of family support services for families of children with disabilities.

*The programs listed above work individually and collectively to ensure a strong foundation for DD services and supports necessary for the inclusion of children and adults with developmental disabilities in all facets of community life.*

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## NACDD RECOMMENDATIONS

The 109th Congress should work toward timely reauthorization of the DD Act in 2007.

Congress should collaborate with the partners that implement the legislation: the **National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD)**, the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), and the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN), and with the entities connected to the Projects of National Significance. Congress also should work in collaboration with individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. In the coming months, NACDD will deliver to Congress specific recommendations for the 2007 reauthorization of the DD Act.