

February 1, 2019



2019 Legislative Roundtable



MetroWest Center for Independent Living and Easter Seals of Massachusetts hosted the annual Legislative Roundtable.

In attendance, in addition to MWCIL and Easter Seals staff, were Karen Langley from REquipment, Senate President Karen Spilka, Senator Jamie Eldridge and Representatives Kate Hogan, David Linsky, Carmine Gentile, Jack Lewis and Maria Robinson. We were happy to meet Representative Robinson. All of the other senators and representatives have fully supported all of our priorities in the past which we greatly appreciate.

The Easter Seals of Massachusetts spoke about the importance of their Assistive Technology programs and their Youth Leadership programs. These programs have benefited countless people with disabilities, and are so important in helping people become and stay independent. Assistive Technology Loans can mean the difference between keeping a job and being stuck at home.

Karen Langley spoke about the positive impacts of the DME Reuse program

called REquipment. The program now has 4 site partners and 3 additional drop off sites. REquipment, which collects, refurbishes and distributes durable medical equipment to people with disabilities, represents significant savings to Medicaid and other insurance programs. REquipment should continue to be funded through line item 4120-4000 with specific earmark language.

MWCIL focused on two priorities - The AAB Bill and an initiative that prohibits discrimination against adults with disabilities in family and juvenile court proceedings. We will be sending out more information on these bills in the near future.

- **HD.2021 and SD.814 - An Act Relative to the Architectural Access Board.** This act would remove the discrepancy between the ADA and the MA building code which currently allows barriers to access for people with disabilities in housing and employment. This civil right was guaranteed in 1990, yet is still not fully implemented in MA, due to archaic building codes.
- **HD.3464 and SD 1443 - An Act Prohibiting Discrimination Against Adults with Disabilities in Family and Juvenile Court Proceedings.** This act would reduce instances where capable parents are denied the right to raise their children. The act will require courts to determine if a parent's disability causes actual harm rather than discriminating based on perceptions.

Sincerely,
Paul Spooner, Executive Director



Senate President Karen Spilka and Paul Spooner



Senate President Karen Spilka



Representative Kate Hogan



Representative Maria Robinson



David Correia and Sadie Simone



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