

September 2010

Issue: 1

# MetroWest

Center for Independent Living, Inc.

## Welcome to Our *New* Newsletter!

Greetings!

At the MetroWest Center for Independent Living, we are improving our communication with our consumers and the community. We've updated our website ([MWCIL Website](#)) with:

- Center Services Information
- Extensive Resource Links
- ADA Details
- Disability News
- ... and more

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We've also added [Find us on Facebook](#) . We'd like get *your* opinions in our Discussion Forums, as well as share actions and activities affecting our MetroWest residents on the Wall.

And finally, here is our first Newsletter! Our immediate focus is on the upcoming November elections. The Tea Party and the Party of No will almost certainly cut back services for people with disabilities with their focus on lowering tax revenues. This first newsletter stresses the importance of learning about the candidates (you don't need a degree in Google forensics), and VOTING. We also have linked to news on the recent ADAPT action, and have provided information about the upcoming ONE NATION WORKING TOGETHER RALLY.

Our next issue will contain in-depth reporting on the three Massachusetts ballot questions.

from Paul Spooner  
Director of MetroWest Center for Independent Living

## VOTE!

Don't underestimate the power of your vote. After Scott Brown snuck into the Senate, MA incumbents are very motivated to earn your vote. And most of them deserve our support. The "throw-out-the-incumbents" movement will have unintended consequences as many of our representatives now have enough seniority to be on very powerful committees. Everyone in the House of Representatives is up for re-election as well as the Governor, the Attorney General, and many state Senators and Representatives.

If you are not a registered voter, the deadline for registering to vote is October 13.



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October March  
10-2-10

Join a quarter of a million other Americans at the **One Nation Working Together Rally** on the **Mall in Washington, DC at noon on October 2**. 170 Progressive Groups have joined as [One Nation](#). The purpose of the march is to re-order the nation's priorities to invest in our most valuable resource - our people. Ethan Ellis shares his thoughts why we should all attend: "We share their dream of Jobs, Justice, Education and Equality for All. Be there to make sure they know it and include us in that dream. Be there to make sure that we work together to make it a reality for all of us. It is the only way it will. Unions, racial, religious, women, LGBT, student, ecological, peace, civil and human rights groups all include people with

If you plan to be traveling on Election Day, November 2, or find it a pain to go to the polls, you should get an absentee ballot (Contact Town Hall for the process - it's easier than you would expect!). If you need transportation, contact your campaign of choice.

***Make your voice heard by voting.***

## November Ballot Initiatives

The November Election includes 3 initiatives - ALL of which will affect the disability community. The [Disability Consortium Newsletter](#) has the following articulate advice. Share this with ALL your friends and family.

**Vote No, No, No!** In this time of deep and continuing Recession, another BIG threat to our communities and families looms in November, and we as a sector need to do everything we can to ensure that it does not happen. The threats are the questions on November's ballot.

Question 1 would eliminate the sales tax on alcoholic beverages, costing the state \$110 million in tax revenue that's now dedicated to drug and alcohol treatment programs.

Question 2 would repeal Chapter 40B, which allows developers to circumvent exclusionary zoning laws to build affordable housing in communities where there is none or very few units available.

Question 3 would cut the state sales tax to 3%, thereby costing the state \$2.5 billion in tax revenue which would mean even more huge state and local budget cuts.

All of these questions have a negative impact on poor and working people. We already had \$1 billion in budget cuts last year and we had \$1.6 billion again this year. On top of that because stimulus funds are used up, the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation predicts a \$1.5-\$2 billion budget deficit for next year's budget that again could force more big budget cuts. If on top of these two years of cuts and possibly a third year of cuts, we have an additional \$2.5+ billion in state revenue loss forcing more cuts, what will be left of programs and services we care about?

From the Disability Consortium Newsletter:  
<http://www.dpcma.org>

## Recommended Blog - Ethan B. Ellis

Ethan B. Ellis writes a provocative blog for [Next Step](#). His extensive political knowledge makes this blog an important resource for anyone who wants to keep up with the latest in public policy and implementation. Among his recent articles is one about a trip to Atlantic City, and its lack of accessibility - 20 years after the ADA. Another article gives specific information on planned services cutbacks in several states. Check it out!

## Voter Tips

Each voter should use his or her vote carefully, and make informed choices. Many people do not realize that the CANDIDATES

disabilities. All these groups fight for causes that we also fight for as a group. It is time, past time, for us to make common cause with them. "

For more of [Ethan Ellis's](#) ideas on why people with disabilities need to show up, visit his blog.

[email Accessibility questions](#)

The [Go Next Step Website](#) has more information.

ADAPT Action in Washington, DC



The ADAPT Action is September 19-22. Read [Reports from the field](#). ADAPT takes over HUD on September 21. Activists have been arrested.

***About Us:***

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WANT TO MEET YOU. They are more than willing to come and talk to your organization or group. And their calendars are filled with public events.

- If you have an organization that would like to meet with particular candidate(s), come up with some possible dates and locations and contact their campaign staff. Inviting the candidate to your organization is the best way to focus the discussion on your own issues.
- One good way to contact the candidates and/or their campaign is to locate their website. Most are also on facebook now. From there, you can either telephone the campaign staff or email them. Telephoning may get you quicker results.
- The candidates' websites may provide detailed schedules of the candidate's public activities. If not, contact the campaign and ask them about convenient events that the candidate plans to attend.
- Most towns in MetroWest have Democratic Town Committees and Republican Town Committees. These committees are active in political campaigns, and should be able to provide you with more ideas on how to meet the candidates.

You will be very surprised at how much you can learn about a candidate in a short time when you see them in person. While websites, television, newspapers and colleagues are all valuable sources of information, the best way to form your own opinion is by meeting the candidates yourself.



## ADA Regulations Update

The Department of Justice released updated ADA regulations and standards on July 26. The two new rules state that in 18 months, all new buildings must be constructed in a way that's compliant with 2010 standards. The regulations will now cover certain types of facilities and sites not addressed before such as amusement parks, marinas, gyms, golf facilities and swimming pools as well as municipal facilities such as courtrooms and prisons. You can find much more information on Federal accessibility at their website - [www.access-board.gov](http://www.access-board.gov).

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