

Ombudsman is Ex-Officio Member of the Governor's Olmstead Plan Sub-Cabinet

January 30, 2013

Gov. Mark Dayton has issued an [executive order \(PDF\)](#) establishing a sub-cabinet to develop and implement a comprehensive plan supporting freedom of choice and opportunity for people with disabilities. The Olmstead Plan Sub-Cabinet, led by Lt. Gov. Yvonne Prettner Solon, includes commissioners from eight state agencies, including DHS.

The sub-cabinet will evaluate policies, programs, statutes and regulations of state agencies against the standards set forth in the Olmstead decision to determine whether any should be revised or modified or require legislative action in an effort to improve the availability of community-based services for people with disabilities. The sub-cabinet will seek input from consumers, families of consumers, advocacy organizations, service providers and others.

In *Olmstead v. L.C.*, a 1999 U.S. Supreme Court decision, the state of Georgia was sued for unnecessarily institutionalizing people with intellectual disabilities. The court ruled that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires states to provide services to people with disabilities in the “most integrated settings” appropriate to their needs. Writing an Olmstead Plan is the way a state documents what needs to happen — and when it will happen — to achieve this goal. An important product of the work of the sub-cabinet includes the development of measurable goals as a way to demonstrate the state's continuing commitment to the principles in the Olmstead decision.

The Ombudsman for the State of Minnesota Office of the Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities, Roberta Opheim, and the Executive Director of the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, Dr. Colleen Wieck, shall be *ex officio* members of the Sub-Cabinet.