

ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CITIZENS MINNESOTA
3225 Lyndale Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55408

1985 LEGISLATIVE GOALS

APPROPRIATIONS

The ARC supports appropriate levels of funding for programs that affect the basic needs of persons with mental retardation and their families or contribute to the prevention of mental retardation. This includes selected appropriations for the Department of Human Services, Department of Health, Metropolitan Transit Commission, Department of Energy, Planning & Development, Department of Education, Department of Economic Security, State Council for the Handicapped, community social services, community health services, and school aids.

CIVIL RIGHTS

The ARC Minnesota supports legislation that strengthens the civil and human rights of people with mental retardation and that prohibits discriminatory practices in areas such as employment, health care, health insurance, education, housing, residential zoning, public services, and parenting.

COMMUNITY-ACCESS

The ARC Minnesota supports the utilization of services existing in the community and the elimination of the barriers to access to those services. This includes programs such as public transportation subsidies.

DAY HABILITATION

The ARC Minnesota supports legislation that strengthens and improves the quality of day habilitation programs. This includes efforts to increase the opportunities for community integration and age appropriate activities, eliminate in-house programming, provide transition from the education system, require trained and qualified staff, increase opportunities for vocational skill training and increase the availability of programs to meet the needs of all persons.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

The ARC Minnesota has as its top priority mandating special education and services to children under the age of four. We believe that education should be the lead agency, but that school districts should be encouraged to enter into contractual, co-funding and co-sponsoring relationships with other child serving agencies.

Parents should have the opportunity to be strongly involved in their child's program of training and education. The legislation should require inter-agency collaboration and cooperation and the state should adequately fund the necessary travel by early education staff. Child find programs should be expanded and strengthened.

Children who are at-risk and who do not meet the definition of handicapped student should be provided services through the county social service system and adequate funds should be made available.

ECONOMICS

The ARC Minnesota supports increasing the economic independence of persons with mental retardation. This includes efforts to increase the amount of General Assistance grants and the personal needs allowance and efforts to establish a state housing subsidy program.

EDUCATION

The ARC Minnesota supports state funding for special education programs at the 70% reimbursement level, adequate funds for pre-school screening programs, and maintenance of the categorical aids in vocational education for special needs populations.

The ARC Minnesota promotes maintaining strong state statutes and regulations for the education of all handicapped children, especially in the areas of IEPs, parent participation, mainstreaming, least restrictive environment and due process.

ARC Minnesota also supports the expansion of post-secondary vocational-technical/vocational-educational programs to people with mental retardation. The ARC Minnesota also supports efforts to utilize high-tech for children with handicaps and efforts to strengthen the transition between education and employment.

EMPLOYMENT

The ARC Minnesota supports efforts to increase the opportunities for meaningful work and appropriate training for people with mental retardation. This includes funds for follow-up from sheltered work to employment, and making funds available for other options such as workshops without walls, OJT, transitional programs and tax incentives for employers.

The ARC Minnesota will support efforts to remove existing disincentives for increased earnings. This includes requiring health insurance benefits to be provided when a person loses MA eligibility due to higher earnings in a vocational program, and efforts to increase the amount of earnings that can be retained under MA, SSI and GA.

FAMILY SUBSIDY

The ARC Minnesota supports increased funds for the family subsidy program in order to serve an additional 200 families and to fund an increase in the monthly maximum grant allowance from \$250 to \$300.

PREVENTION

The ARC Minnesota supports the retention, expansion and further development of programs geared toward the prevention of mental retardation, such as genetic counseling, health education, immunization, screening, early intervention, environmental and nutritional programs.

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

The ARC Minnesota supports the expansion of residential service options. This includes efforts to increase funds for the training and recruitment of specialized foster care parents. In addition, the ARC will monitor the implementation of waived services and will request legislative review of the existing moratorium on group home development.

Special efforts will be made to remove children from placement in state hospitals, to "prevent their placement in state hospitals, and to review the placement of persons with mental retardation in nursing homes.

RESPIRE CARE

The ARC Minnesota supports the establishment of and funding for a statewide respite care program to be made available to families with children and adults with mental retardation. This program should allow for a variety of service options and flexibility.

SAFE CARE AND TREATMENT

The ARC Minnesota believes that every mentally retarded person has the right to safe care and treatment and the right to live without fear of abuse. The ARC Minnesota supports the strengthening of existing laws prohibiting the abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and children and strengthening the sections requiring the reporting of such abuse. The ARC Minnesota also supports efforts to increase the quality of supervision, increase staff training efforts at state hospitals and community facilities, and increase the number of staff on state and county level to provide better monitoring of licensing standards.

SEMI INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES

The ARC Minnesota supports increased funding for SILS, and efforts to both foster the development of different models and the expansion of eligibility criteria to people who are not in need of ICF/MR level of care and/or who are not classified as mentally retarded but have difficulty functioning independently.

SOCIAL SERVICES

The ARC Minnesota supports additional funds to decrease case management/client ratios, provide increased training for case managers, and to improve standards for case management.

Approved by the ARC Minnesota Board of Directors - June 9, 1984