Eliminating Barriers and Supporting People with I/DD to Vote

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NDRN

• National Disability Rights Network

• The nonprofit membership organization for the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) Systems for individuals with disabilities
The P&A Network

• Established by Congress to protect the rights of people with disabilities through legal support, advocacy, referral, and education

• In all 50 states, DC, Puerto Rico, US Territories, and the Native American Consortium (Hopi, Navaho and Piute Nations in the Four Corner region of the Southwest)

• Largest provider of legal advocacy services to people with disabilities in the US
PAVA

• Protection & Advocacy for Voter Access

• Federal mandate to the P&As

• Established under HAVA to “ensure the full participation in the electoral process for individuals with disabilities, including registering to vote, casting a vote, and accessing polling places”
Elections Are Coming

• 2018 Midterm General Election: Tuesday November 6

• https://www.eac.gov/voters/register-and-vote-in-your-state/
Why Our Vote Is So Important

• Disability voter turnout is 6% behind non-disabled Americans

• That’s about 3 million missing voters

• That’s enough voters to win any election
Polling Places: More Accessible

  • 2000: 16%
  • 2008: 27%
  • 2016: 40%
Voting Booths: Less Accessible

• Voting stations with at least one impediment:
  • 2008: 46%
  • 2016: 65%

• Less likely to be: private, wheelchair accessible, earphone ready, powered on
Voter ID Laws

• More strict and complicated voter ID laws are on the rise in states

Confusing Ballots

• Ballots are getting longer and more complicated everywhere

• Some ballots have confusing layouts

• Ballot measures are written in legalese

• www.vote411.org
Your Right to Assistance

• Section 208 provides for voters who need assistance to vote by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write

• Any such voter may be given assistance by a person of the voter's choice, other than the voter's employer or agent of the employer or officer or agent of the voter's union
Poll Worker Challenges

• Reports that poll workers question voters with disabilities

• Limits on number of voters that one person can assist

• Call voter advocacy hotlines if your right to vote is challenged
Voter Competency Laws

• Loss of the right to vote, usually determined with guardianship

• Know your state laws: http://www.bazelon.org/our-work/voting/

• Talk to your guardian and your P&A
Supported Decision Making

• Individuals make decisions by choosing supports to help them make choices

• Can help individuals retain the right to vote

• Research your state: http://supporteddecisionmaking.org/states
Options for Voters

• Curbside voting
• Early voting
• Absentee balloting
Researching Your Options

• Your state elections website
• Your local elections officials
• Your P&A: www.ndrn.org
• www.electionary.info
When Voting Goes Wrong

• Call your P&A: www.ndrn.org

• Call Election Protection: www.866ourvote.org

• NAD’s ASL Hotline (301-818-VOTE)

• The Arc’s voter app
Reporting Back

• Call a voter hotline, even if you get to vote

• Talk to your P&A

• Take SABE’s voter survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018GoVoterSurvey
The Bottom Line

• Don’t forfeit your right to vote.
Thank You

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