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Subgroup/Office of Origin: Public Liaison

Series/Staff Member: William White, Jr.

Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 14202

FolderID:

Folder Title:

Consortium of Developmental Disabilities Councils

Stack:
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Row:
31

Section:
2

Shelf:
9

Position:
1

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 1, 1996

Warm greetings to everyone gathered in our nation's capital for the National Public Policy Seminar of the Consortium of Developmental Disabilities Councils.

Our success as a nation depends upon our ability to embrace the creativity and energy of all our people, and my Administration remains dedicated to that goal. The efforts of the Consortium of Developmental Disabilities Council to expand opportunities for citizens with severe disabilities are going a long way toward achieving that goal, helping to diversify our nation's communities and work force and strengthening the public's appreciation of the contributions that people with disabilities make to our society.

I commend the members and supporters of the CDDC for your work to help every citizen enjoy equal access to the American Dream. As you meet to consider important issues affecting the quality of life for people with disabilities and their families, I thank all of you for ensuring that our national commitment to empowerment and equality is realized in our public policies and hiring practices.

On behalf of all those whose lives you've enriched, I commend you for your service and send best wishes for a productive and enjoyable seminar.

Bill Clinton

Consortium of Developmental Disabilities Councils

Office of Government Relations • 9305 Forest Haven Drive • Alexandria, VA 22309
• Telephone (703) 780-8285 • Fax (703) 780-0223

February 20, 1996

**Mr. Richard Kostro
Office of Public Liaison
The White House
Washington, DC 20500**

Dear Richard:

It was a pleasure to speak with you this afternoon regarding my request for a "welcome message" from the President to the members of our organization who will be attending our upcoming national meeting in Washington, DC. The Consortium of Developmental Disabilities Councils will be holding a National Public Policy Seminar in Washington, DC, from March 3-5, 1996. During this seminar we will be charting the course for our public policy activities related to the reauthorization of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act and other important public policy matters affecting children and adults with severe disabilities and their families. We will be meeting at the Holiday Inn - Capitol (550 C Street, S.W.).

Attendees at our meeting will include people with disabilities, family members, volunteer Council members and staff of Developmental Disabilities Councils from many different parts of the United States. The following are some background points that might prove helpful in drafting the letter:

1. For over 20 years, Developmental Disabilities Councils have developed innovative and cost-effective service models designed to meet the needs of people with severe disabilities and their families in home and community-based settings. On a daily basis, Councils provide funding and support for initiatives in family support, educational improvement, job training, and community living arrangements. As a result of the work of these Councils, tens of thousands of Americans with severe disabilities have had the opportunity to grow up in a family, attend neighborhood schools, obtain employment, live in community housing, and actively contribute to the lives of their communities.
2. In these times of debate regarding the relationship between Federal and State governments, Developmental Disabilities Councils provide a model of positive partnership. All States and Territories receive funding for their Developmental Disabilities Councils under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act. Governors then appoint all the members of the Council, over half of whom must be "customers" of the service system (i.e. people with developmental disabilities and family members). (N.B. These Council members receive no pay for their long hours of service). The Council then identifies pressing needs in the State and invests its Federal resources in providing solutions to address these needs. In this way, broad Federal priorities are positively addressed (e.g. increasing employment opportunities for America's most vulnerable citizens), Governors are involved from the beginning in translating these broad priorities into activities that are

relevant to meeting important needs in their States, and the "customers" of the service system play an active role in designing an improved system.

3. Developmental Disabilities Councils are committed to the establishment of services that are controlled by their "customers" and by local communities. Services designed in this fashion have been found to be quite cost-effective. For example, Council supported community living arrangements cost less than half of what it costs to keep a person in a State institution. Council sponsored employment initiatives have resulted in thousands of people with developmental disabilities becoming taxpayers, reducing their dependency on government services. And Council sponsored family support programs have prevented the enormous emotional and financial costs associated with placing a child outside of the home.

4. Developmental Disabilities Councils are ideally positioned for the future, to assist Governors and other State policy makers in their important deliberations regarding funding for education, Medicaid, job training, and other key areas of government responsibility.

Please let me know if there is anything I can do to assist you with this letter. Knowing the extremely busy pace of you and your hard working colleagues, I have enclosed a "sample" letter. Please feel free to ignore this, should protocol requirements or your own literary sensibilities lead you toward a more polished message. As our meeting begins on March 3, 1996, it would be quite helpful to have the letter on or before March 1, 1996. The letter can be mailed to the address above, or I would be happy to stop by to pick it up. I would, of course, be very pleased to provide you with more background information, specific examples of our work in the States, etc.

As you know, this has been a difficult year for human service programs. Still, our members remain committed to continuing in their important work. As we know of the President's strong support for our efforts (as evidenced in his recent request for FY1995 funding levels for Developmental Disabilities Councils for FY1997), we would sincerely appreciate this statement of affirmation.

Thank you very much for your kind offer of assistance in communicating what we know to be the President's strong support for people with severe disabilities and their families.

Sincerely,

Edward P. Burke
Vice President for Government Relations

Sample Letter

The White House

March 3, 1996

To the Members of the Consortium of Developmental Disabilities Councils:

Welcome to Washington! Over the next few days you will be considering some very important issues impacting upon the quality of life experienced by people with severe disabilities and their families all across America. For over 20 years, the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act has provided Governors, State policy makers, and, most importantly, people with developmental disabilities and their families, the authority to replace the prejudice and exclusion of the past with hope for a future filled with increased independence, productivity, and integration into the rich cultural fabric of American life. Through your efforts under this Act, you have changed the course of the future, you have vastly expanded opportunities, and you have taught us all the value of every American.

As you meet to consider the future direction of your work, I urge you to consider the needs of people with developmental disabilities not only in the 1990s, but in the rapidly approaching twenty-first century. Will the promises of increased independence, productivity, and community integration ring true in the days ahead as they do now? Your efforts will play a significant role in answering this question. So, as always, I urge you to approach your task thoughtfully, carefully, and in the best tradition of the bipartisan support your efforts have always enjoyed.

Your work to date has resulted in tens of thousands of Americans with severe disabilities having the opportunity to grow up in a family, attend neighborhood schools, obtain employment, live in community housing, and actively contribute to the lives of their communities. I am confident that you will continue in this vital work, and to this end, I have directed the members of my Administration to continue in their full support of your efforts.

I wish you a very productive meeting, and I applaud you for your dedication toward fostering the increased independence, productivity, and community integration of people with developmental disabilities. America is a better nation as a result of your efforts!

Sincerely,

William Jefferson Clinton

REQUEST FOR SPECIAL LETTER

DATE:

2/22/96

TO:

Carmen Fowler
Office of Presidential Messages

FROM:

Dana Wyckoff
Office of Public Liaison

RE:

LETTER REQUEST

ORGANIZATION NAME:

Consortium of Developmental Disabilities Councils

CONTACT NAME:

Ed Burk

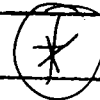
ORGANIZATION ADDRESS:

9305 Forest Haven Drive,
Alexandria, VA 22309

DATE OF EVENT:

3/3-5

DO NOT MAIL CALL ME SEND TO 122



clo
Dana
Wyckoff

PRINT DATE:

Mail Out/Send Copy _____

DATE NEEDED:

ASAP

IMPORTANCE OF LETTER (SCALE OF 1-10):

8

COMMENTS:

We understand this is late & we are sorry. Bill White, who is new in the office did not know about the 21 day period. We are truly sorry, but if it is at all possible would Really REALLY appreciate this.

ROUTINE

URGENT

RUSH

Please photo copy and return to me in Room 122 or fax at x66218.

Letter can be done by date requested _____

/I.D. # _____

Letter can't be done by date requested but will be done by _____

Letter will not be done (reason): _____

Status: Date: _____ Stage: _____

Date: _____

Stage: _____

Date: _____

Stage: _____

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21 ending

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