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Voter Registration Campaign Targets Floridians with Disabilities

Tallahassee, Fla. — Floridians with disabilities and their families, caregivers and advocates are being urged to have a stronger voice during the 2012 elections with the recent launch of a targeted voter registration campaign.

The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) partnered with The Arc of Florida and Disability Rights Florida to launch the “Your Vote, Your Voice” campaign during a press conference at the Florida Press Center on Thursday. The purpose of the campaign is to ensure Floridians with disabilities are educated on how to be active participants in upcoming elections.

“Registering to vote enables citizens with developmental disabilities and their families, caregivers and advocates to voice their opinions about the policies and legislation that impact their lives,” said Margaret Hooper, Public Policy Coordinator of the FDDC.

Secretary of State Ken Detzner and Leon County Supervisor of Elections Ion Sancho – representing the Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections – spoke at the press conference and discussed assistance available at the state and local levels to help make registering and voting an easy process for citizens with disabilities. Other speakers included Hooper, Ciara Taylor, Voter Registration Coordinator for the Florida League of Women Voters; Deborah Linton, Executive Director of The Arc of Florida; and Robert Whitney, Executive Director of Disability Rights Florida.

The “Your Vote, Your Voice” campaign consists of various education and advocacy tools such as a television public service announcement (PSA) on the ease of registering to vote, a voter registration fact sheet, a voting guide, sample social media posts for advocates to share and a PowerPoint presentation that group leaders can use when encouraging people in their local communities to register to vote. Each organization is urging citizens with disabilities to take advantage of these resources, which are available to the public by telephone request (see phone numbers below) and online at www.fddc.org and www.arcflorida.org.

“Having this information readily available will help get more citizens with disabilities and their families involved in the legislative process,” said The Arc of Florida Executive Director Deborah Linton. “Hopefully, this campaign will help make registration and voting more accessible and ensure these citizens do not miss their opportunity to be heard.”

For more information about the “Your Vote, Your Voice” campaign or a copy of the television PSA, contact The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council at 1-800-580-7800 or The Arc of Florida at 1-800-226-1155.

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