



Speaking out for people with intellectual & developmental disabilities



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**Reminders:  
Help VOR Grow!**

**Challenge!  
Recruit 5 New  
VOR Members  
Today!**

## VOR Weekly News Update

News and views for VOR Advocates

**[Registration](#) and [Sponsorship Details](#) are now availability for VOR's Annual Conference and Washington Initiative, June 8 - 12, 2013 in Washington, D.C. Please join us!**

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**Did you receive this as forwarded e-mail? If so, someone thought you would benefit from VOR's information. Please consider [joining VOR](#) and receive this E-News Update publication weekly!**  
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### Calendar Reminders

\* **Rescheduled!** The State Coordinator and Member Webinar is now scheduled for Wednesday, March 13 at 12:00 pm central / 1:00 pm mountain

[Click here to register.](#) Registration details are also provided at the end of this Update.

\*Through May 1, 2013: [Be a Sponsor. Get a Sponsor: Support VOR's Conference and Initiative. Sponsorship opportunities, in partnership with EP Magazine, are now available](#)

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\* **Sunday, June 9, 2013**

VOR Annual Conference \* Washington, D.C. [Registration now available. Details online.](#)

\* **Begins Monday, June 10, 2013**

VOR Washington Initiative (Begins Monday, June 10, 2013) \* Washington, D.C. [Details online.](#)

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## **State News**

### **1. New Jersey: Legislation planned to possibly halt closing of Woodbridge Developmental Center**

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***Courier News* \* February 14, 2013**

WOODBIDGE — State Sen. Joseph Vitale, D-19th District, plans to introduce legislation next week that would reverse the binding aspect of a recommendation made by a task force last summer to close two of the state's developmental centers, including the one here.

A similar bill is planned in the Assembly, and if approved could lead to a more negotiated discussion about the future of the development centers that house some of the state's most profoundly developmentally disabled residents.

Vitale said the law that exists allowing the task force's recommendation to be binding is a mistake. He said closing the only two northern New Jersey developmental centers presents problems for residents and their families. He said it creates an emotional toll for center residents if they are moved and for their elderly parents to visit them.

The need for new legislation was prompted by Wednesday's [five-hour joint hearing of the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee and the Assembly Human Services Committee at Montclair State University in which about 100 relatives of developmental centers' residents spoke and pleaded for the facilities to remain open.](#)

Joanne St. Amand, president of the Woodbridge Developmental Center Parents

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Association whose sister Rosemary, 57, has lived at the center for 37 years, said she left the hearing hopeful that the families' message had been heard.

"It was a good step forward toward stopping the closure," she said. "Everyone was very receptive to our cause." She added no promises or commitments were made.

"Grown men were crying talking about their brothers and sisters. They promised their parents they would take care of them," said Marylyn Carr of Rahway, whose son Eugene has lived at the Woodbridge Developmental Center for 37 years.

She said closing centers lives would destroy people's lives — residents who are emotionally attached to their caregivers, and the family members who would have to travel great distances to visit them.

"The only way we can go on with our lives is because they (relatives in the developmental centers) are being taken care of," Carr said.

The Woodbridge Developmental Center is one of two centers that was recommended for closure last August by the Task Force on the Closure of State Developmental Centers, created by the state Legislature. The task force, which evaluated all of the centers, presented the recommendation to the state Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities, which has been working to provide individuals with resources and support in the communities.

The other facility slated for closure is the North Jersey Developmental Center in Totowa.

Many relatives of development center residents have opposed closing the facilities that they feel provides the best care for their loved ones. Harriet Fass of Bridgewater, said her sister has lived at the Woodbridge Developmental Center since 1965. "Woodbridge

is her home,” said Fass, adding in 1982 her sister was placed in a group home and it proved to be a bad experience and her behavior deteriorated.

“My sister does not adapt well to change. We the family members know what is best for our loved ones. The developmental centers must stay open,” she said.

**Related New Jersey News:**

[Families plead with lawmakers not to shut Totowa, Woodbridge developmental](#)

[centers \(\*The Record\*](#)

[\(\*NorthJersey.com\*\), February 13, 2013\)](#)

[Doing the Right Thing for New Jersey’s Most Vulnerable Population: Anxieties,](#)

[Arguments About Where Profoundly](#)

[Disabled Will Live \(NJ Spotlight \\* February 13, 2013\)](#)

(Summary: Families argue against group homes, while state plans to shutter two large developmental centers (including video).

**2. Wyoming: HB 68, to study efficient use of Wyoming Life Resource Center for residents and non-residents clears Senate**

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**County 10 (Wyoming) \* February 13, 2013**

The Wyoming Life Resource Center bill, state HB 68, passed third and final reading in the Senate headed to the House for concurrence, where it failed. The bill now be assigned to a conference committee to iron out differences in the legislation between the House and Senate versions.

Supporters and friends of the WLRC have testified and communicated with lawmakers about the bill.

As originally introduced into the House of Representatives, the bill called for a study to transition clients out of the Lander institution as a cost saving measure for the Wyoming Department of Health and use those savings to provide services to others in the state not now

being served. The bill was amended in the Senate to eliminate references to transitioning clients out of the WLRC and instead to broaden the study for ways to deliver services there more efficiently and generate additional revenues at WLRC by accepting clients from other states.

Note: VOR has stood with families and guardians in support of the more balanced Senate version of HB 68, sharing our national perspective with Wyoming Legislators.

### **Thought of the Day**

### **3. Easy to forget, critical to remember: Perspective is everything**

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***Katya's Non-Profit Marketing Blog*** \* February 15, 2013

**VOR Note:** *The following is written from a marketing perspective, however, these words of wisdom - perspective is everything - apply directly to our advocacy work. It is critically important to know your audience or you will lose their attention, at least, and maybe even their support.*

### **Easy to forget, critical to remember: Perspective is everything**

Have you ever noticed how very young kids' drawings usually don't feature a person's neck? Have you wondered why?

My theory is that if you're two or three years old and your perspective is low to the ground, you don't see people's necks when you look up. You see a head sitting on arms.

I can't think of a better analogy for marketing [and advocacy]. Marketing [and advocacy] mandates that we look at the world through the eyes of our audience and communicate from that perspective. The process of pushing into a foreign frame of reference can be hard, but when we do it, we find its value. Everything looks wildly different from that perspective. And our work must meld to its crazy contours. This is the mind-bending fun that is our profession.

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**State Coordinator and Member Webinar: Free and open to ALL VOR Members**

**Date:** Wed, March 13, 2013

**Time:** 10:00 AM Pacific; 11:00 AM Mountain; 12:00 PM Central; 1:00 PM Eastern

**Dial-In Number for Audio:** 866.740.1260

**[Registration Link](#)**

**Access Code:** 4562930

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