



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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Legislative & Public Awareness Committee Minutes for March 17, 2023

Members Present (P)

Not Present (NP)

Jeanette Alexander (P)
Michele Leahy (NP)
Michelle Mitchell (NP)

Julia Grant Barol (P)
William Del Toro Vargas (P)
Jessica Keogh (NP)

Lynn Heitz (NP)
Paul Fogle (P)

PaRC Staff Present: Chris Todd

OVR Staff Present: Jim Whitonis, Cheryl Novak

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: None

AGENDA ITEMS:

Discussion of Talking Points for Meetings with State Legislators Scheduled for March 30th and 31st, 2023

- Members discussed Representative Dan Miller and Representative Tarik Khan sponsored legislation memorandum regarding 14(c) Certificates / Prohibiting the Subminimum Wage for Pennsylvanians with Disabilities in State Contracts and asked a link be shared with the committee along with sharing talking points and documents discussed today;
<https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/Legis/CSM/showMemoPublic.cfm?chamber=H&SPick=20230&cosponId=40188>
- Members discussed additional talking points including importance of full funding for OVR, letter of support / reintroduction for House Bill 547 which would create a Department of Inclusion/Accessibility/Disability if enacted. A focus on employment in general including the Employment First Oversight Commission (EFOC) Report. Include report in an email for the committee regarding talking points and include in premeeting materials with Legislators. Discussed the talking point of EFOC report section that highlights employment issues relating to the Office of Long-Term Living (OLTL) Waiver.

- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas informed members that Representative Miller also is sponsoring House Bills regarding digital accessibility, accessibility placards, and insurance coverage for wheelchairs.
- Members requested including information about each Legislator that Council is meeting within the schedule and providing all Legislators information about the PaRC including the Annual Report and website. Also discussed importance of including information about the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), and that the Council is Governor Appointed, Federally Mandated by the Rehab Act as amended by WIOA. Suggested providing a link to OVR's website when sending premeeting information.
- Members requested staff provide a reminder for all committee members that it is important to not deviate from the Council approved talking points.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 3:30PM