



# Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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## Legislative & Public Awareness Committee Minutes for February 28, 2025, from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Members Present (P)

Not Present (NP)

Passle Helminski (P)  
Sylenthia Dent (NP)  
Julia Barol (P)

Lynn Heitz (P)  
Joan Myers Goodman (P)  
William Paz De Melo (NP)

Christie Cyktor (P)  
Michelle Mitchell (P)  
Susan Tomasic (P)

**PaRC Staff Present:** Chris Todd

**OVR Staff Present:** Chris Harbert, Jim Whitonis

### CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was conducted through Zoom. Ms. Passle Helminski called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM once quorum was established.

### ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Ms. Passle Helminski requested an addition to the agenda to add election of Committee Chair for the remainder of the current 2024-2025 Fiscal Year.

### APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES

***MOTION was made by Ms. Julia Barol to approve the agenda with additions and past meeting minutes. Ms. Joan Myers Goodman seconded the motion. All were in favor.***

### State and Federal Legislative Watchlists

- Members reviewed the State and Federal Legislative Watchlists and held discussion about Federal Legislation including [H.R.1175](#) To amend title II of the Social Security Act to require the Commissioner of Social Security to carry out a demonstration project relating to disability benefits of blind individuals and [H.R.1529](#) To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a refundable tax credit against income tax for the purchase of qualified access technology for the blind.

- Members held discussion about Representative Bizzarro's [Memoranda regarding Advocate for Drivers with Disabilities](#). Ms. Passle Helminski explained that a bill number has not been assigned for the memoranda and that a cosponsor is needed. Members discussed the importance of transportation relating to the employment of people with disabilities and providing this information to their State Representatives.

## **State and Federal Position Papers**

- Members reviewed the State and Federal Position Papers.

***MOTION was made by Ms. Lynn Heitz to recommend the addition of [H.R.1175](#) and [H.R.1529](#) to the Federal Position Paper. Ms. Joan Myers Goodman seconded the motion. All were in favor.***

## **Discussion / planning for meetings with Legislators and/or their staff**

- Members agreed to hold virtual meetings with State Legislators and/or their staff in mid to late May. Members requested PaRC personnel send a poll to determine meeting dates and times that do not interfere with Legislative Sessions.
- Ms. Passle Helminski informed attendees that she is resigning as Committee Chair due to personal reasons. Members discussed determining an interim Committee Chair for the remainder of the current 2024-2025 Fiscal Year. Ms. Christie Cyktor accepted nomination for Committee Chair.

***MOTION was made by Ms. Michelle Mitchell to hold virtual meetings with State Legislators and/or their staff in May. Ms. Joan Myers Goodman seconded the motion. All were in favor.***

***MOTION was made by Ms. Joan Myers Goodman to elect Ms. Christie Cyktor as Committee Chair for the remainder of the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year. Ms. Lynn Heitz seconded the motion. All were in favor.***

## **Schedule next meeting**

- Members agreed to hold the next Legislative Committee meeting on March 28, 2025, from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM.

## **Adjourn**

***MOTION was made by Ms. Joan Myers Goodman to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Julia Barol seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.***