



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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Legislative & Public Awareness Committee Minutes for January 20, 2026, from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Members Present (P)

Not Present (NP)

Christie Cyktor (P)
Passle Helminski (P)
Michelle Mitchell (P)

Lynn Heitz (P)
Dorian Rhodes (P)

Julia Barol (P)
Julianna Rodrigues (P)

OVR Staff Present: Chris Harbert

PaRC Personnel Present: Chris Todd

CALL TO ORDER

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

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions.

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. Julianna Rodrigues seconded the motion. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS:

Committee Member Background

- Committee members and OVR staff provided their educational, professional, and advocacy backgrounds.

Draft Letters of Support Regarding Senator Warren's Letter to the Department of Labor

- Members reviewed 2 draft letters of support regarding Senator Warren’s Letter to the Department of Labor which conveys concerns with the undermining of disability employment protections. Members agreed that it would be important to show a united front and have other Pennsylvania organizations sign on to the letters which may also include local or county-based organizations. Members agreed it would be good for Mr. Chris Harbert, OVR, to share the letters with the Governor’s Policy Office at his request. Members also agreed that the letter be reviewed by the OVR Executive Director and shared with the State Board. Ms. Michelle Mitchell explained that there was interest from the Board in partnering with PaRC on this and other efforts related to legislative advocacy.

MOTION was made by Ms. Passle Helminski to forward to Executive Committee the 2 letters of support regarding Senator Warren’s letter. Ms. Julia Barol seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Planning for Spring Meetings with Legislators

Dates / Times

Top Priorities

- Ms. Christie Cyktor explained that Executive Committee and Governance Committee recommended members attending the spring conferences in Washington D.C. also visit with Federal Legislators.
- Members requested that PaRC personnel send a poll to schedule virtual meetings with State Legislators for late April 2026.

Schedule next meeting

- Members agreed to meet again on February 24, 2026, from 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM.

Adjourn

MOTION was made by Ms. Lynn Heitz to adjourn. Ms. Passle Helminski seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.