

NATIONAL
DISABILITY RIGHTS
NETWORK

Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Disabilities



**2008
Annual
Report**

Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access

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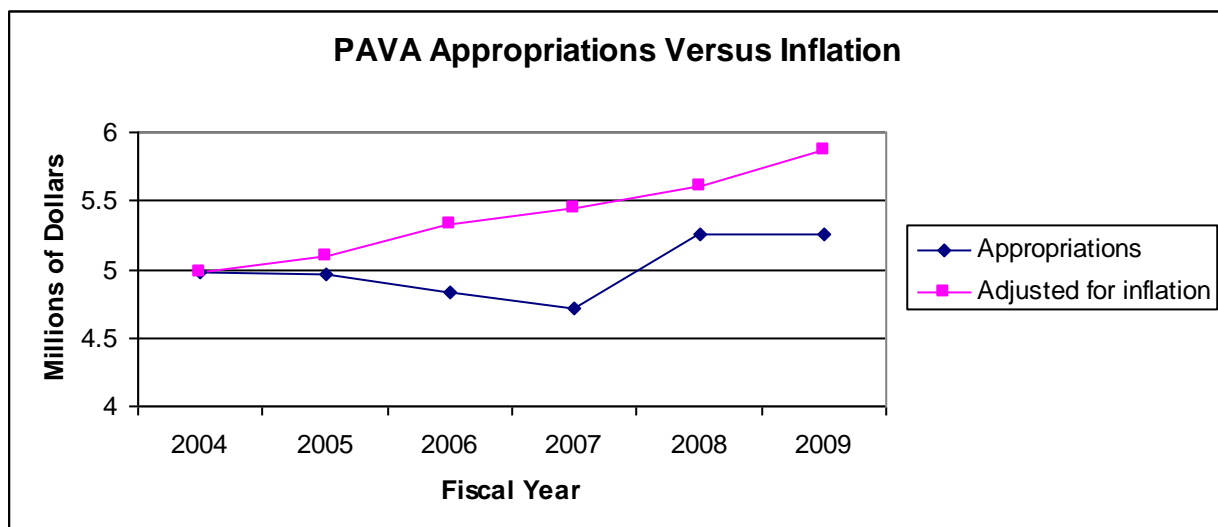
**Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access (PAVA)
Fiscal Year 2010 Appropriations Recommendation- \$7.5 million**

Background/ Funding History

In 2002 Congress passed the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) to make major improvements to voting systems across the country. The law acknowledges the unique obstacles faced by people with disabilities at the polls, and authorizes funding for the Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access (PAVA) program. The PAVA program is administered through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Developmental Disabilities.

PAVA was funded at \$5.3 million in Fiscal Year 2008, the last presidential election year, but additional funds were needed. In Fiscal Year 2009 the program was level funded. While it is not an election year, an increase in funding would still enable the continuation of ongoing improvements to voting sites. In past years, large funding increases have gone to the HAVA programs through the General Services Administration (GSA), but not to the disability programs funded through Health and Human Services. While these GSA increases are important and necessary, the disability advocacy program has been left behind.

NDRN recommends a funding level of \$7.5 million for FY 2010.



Current Program Responsibilities

Individuals with disabilities face innumerable obstacles at voting sites. These problems include physical inaccessibility, a lack of private and independent voting for many individuals with a variety of disabilities, a failure to provide voting and registration materials in accessible formats to people with sensory disabilities, and the outright denial of the right to register and vote based on false assumptions about an individual's ability to vote because of their disability.

PAVA staff is on the ground in communities and states, providing advice, technical assistance, and training to election officials about voting accessibility across the spectrum of disabilities. They also provide outreach, training, and direct representation to individuals with disabilities and the agencies and organizations that serve them. Since the U.S. Election Assistance Commission's new standards for voting machines went into effect in December 2007, PAVA advocates have been tasked with helping states and communities understand and prepare to comply with the new accessibility provisions.

Passage of HAVA was a milestone for the disability community. For the first time, federal legislation guaranteed voters with disabilities the right to a private and independent vote. This achievement, however, is a reminder that the intent of past legislation to secure voting rights for voters with disabilities remains, in many ways, unfulfilled. The United States has always championed free and fair elections and the right of each individual to cast a secret ballot. The PAVA program must be adequately funded to ensure that Americans with disabilities -- who have faced a multitude of barriers to exercising their right to vote -- can participate in the democratic process.

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The following are examples of some of the work undertaken by the PAVA program in 2008.

Alabama

Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program (the AL P&A) and People First of Alabama formed a partnership to provide regional trainings on voting and the use of the AutoMark machine and to hold voter registration drives across the state of Alabama. Both People First and the PAVA staff identified the need for this collaboration as necessary to educating self-advocates on the voting process, voters' rights, accessibility issues, and the importance of planning for transportation. The regional events were held in Decatur, Birmingham, Mobile, and Tuscaloosa during September and October 2008.

Alaska

Disability Law Center of Alaska (the Alaska P&A) collaborated with the Alaska HAVA coordinator and the Americans with Disabilities Act coordinator to develop an information packet educating individuals about their right to file an administrative complaint for violations of HAVA. Additionally, the P&A developed materials to register individuals to vote that included information on the administrative complaint process. These materials were available at all P&A locations in Alaska, and were distributed at conferences and trainings.

American Samoa

Client Assistance Program and Protection and Advocacy (the AS P&A) provided individuals with disabilities with a copy of the Americans with Disabilities Act Voting Guidelines, which details all aspects, specifications, and regulations of polling station accessibility. As a result of PAVA efforts, the distributed information about voting rights informed clients of their right to accessible voting.

Arizona

The Arizona Center for Disability Law (the AZ P&A) investigated polling sites, finding at least 9 polling sites in Yavapai County which failed to meet federal accessibility standards. The PAVA program filed a report with the county, and as a result, a settlement was agreed upon which included permanent and temporary modifications to buildings and polling equipment, as well as accessibility training for staff.

Arkansas

The Disability Rights Center (the AR P&A), in partnership with the Secretary of State's office, wrote, produced, and starred in a three-part video on educating poll workers and others about how to interact with voters with disabilities. The DVDs were distributed to voters, poll workers, election officials, colleges, libraries, and education co-operatives throughout the state. The DVD was also posted on the Disability Rights Center's voting access website.

California

For the February 2008 presidential primary and June 2008 California primary elections, Disability Rights California (the CA P&A) continued its tradition of hosting a statewide Election Day Hotline for voters with disabilities. In the month prior to each election, PAVA staff distributed hotline information flyers and press releases to individuals and organizations. In order to effectively reach California's diverse population, the flyers were made available in the following languages: English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Cambodian, Laotian, Vietnamese, and Hmong.

Colorado

The Legal Center (the CO P&A) provided 28 training sessions to people with disabilities and advocates about the importance of voting and the right to accessible voting. PAVA staff developed a training module about presidential election basics, including party caucuses and county assemblies, and provided it to people with both intellectual and cognitive disabilities. PAVA staff also provided training on eligibility to vote in Colorado. As a result of PAVA staff efforts, interest in voting was very high in 2008.

Connecticut

The PAVA program at the Connecticut Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (the CT P&A) developed a statewide network of people with and without disabilities to monitor the compliance of polling places, particularly in regard to the IVS phone voting system, chosen as the accessible voting system for voters in Connecticut. The people with disabilities in the network represent a wide range of disabilities including visual impairments, orthopedic impairments, intellectual disabilities, and mental illness. On election days, members of the network use the phone system at their polling places and report back to the PAVA program about the conditions of the polling place and system. This information is reviewed with the Office of the Secretary of the State and remedies are developed to correct problems on a local and statewide basis.

Delaware

The Community Legal Aid Society, Inc. (the Delaware P&A) issued a press release to twenty-seven print and broadcast media sources in late January with information about absentee ballots, accessibility of polling places, and the availability of PAVA advocacy in connection with the February 5, 2008 primary. To yield the most efficient results, PAVA staff developed a protocol in Delaware's largest county in which the P&A Advocacy Director had direct cell phone access to the Deputy Election Commissioner to quickly resolve issues discovered by P&A polling site surveyors.

District of Columbia

With assistance from scores of staff and the collaboration of advocates, attorneys, and students throughout the District of Columbia, University Legal Services (the DC P&A) surveyed 105 of the District's 142 polling sites during the February 12, 2008 presidential primary election. After tabulating the survey results, PAVA staff issued a major report with recommendations for improving access at the polls. The report included the finding that 9.5% of the 105 surveyed precincts were structurally inaccessible during the Presidential primary election. In addition, 5.7% of the polls were operationally inaccessible. A shorter follow-up report was issued in the fall of 2008 based on the

local primary election held on September 9, 2008. The most significant achievement in voting access that PAVA staff initiated this year was the Board of Elections' permanent relocation of three structurally inaccessible polling sites that PAVA staff had repeatedly urged.

Florida

The Advocacy Center for Persons with Disabilities (the FL P&A) sent mailings to residential institutions to promote voter registration and voting rights of persons with disabilities living therein. Each of the mailings included Florida Voter Registration applications, Right to Vote posters, Absentee Ballot Request forms, and Voter Right and Responsibilities handouts in English and Spanish. In addition, a handout listing important voting date deadlines, a Florida Supervisor of Elections contact list, and our new twenty page full color publication, 'Voting in Florida: A Guide to Citizens with Disabilities' which PAVA staff produced collaboratively with the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council was included. The mailings, sent to 2,602 assisted living facilities and 663 nursing homes, reminded facility operators of the option for "supervised voting" in their facilities, wherein election officials are required under law to bring the election to the residential facility if a request is made more than 21 days in advance of the election and more than 10 voters would be served.

Georgia

Georgia Advocacy Office (the GA P&A) collaborated with several organizations to conduct voter education for people with disabilities, specifically the significance of voting and how to become involved in the electoral process. PAVA staff disseminated voter training curriculum, voter registration forms, and HAVA priorities and objectives. The training included information about how to decrease barriers to voting, such as transportation. As a result of PAVA advocacy, information was distributed to communities and individuals who were able to apply their new knowledge to the voting process on Election Day.

Guam

Guam Legal Services (the Guam P&A) engaged in several activities targeted at training election officials on voting access for individuals with disabilities. Trainings were conducted in preparation of the 2008 elections, which included races for a congressional delegate, governor, legislators, and village mayors. Although the general elections did not fall within this time period, there was a primary election in September 2008. PAVA staff conducted on-site inspections of polling places to identify and address concerns about voter access during that period.

Hawaii

Hawaii law allows residents to pre-register to vote at age 16. As part of its outreach efforts, the Hawaii Disability Rights Center (the Hawaii P&A) staff kept in contact with special education departments at various schools and disseminated information so that staff could register students with disabilities to vote.

Idaho

DisAbility Rights Idaho (the ID P&A) conducted training at facilities to inform residents of their rights in the electoral process. In their efforts, PAVA staff reviewed selected polling places for accessibility. Additionally, PAVA staff conducted voter registration at the Veterans Administration Medical Center and targeted veterans with disabilities at homeless shelters for registration assistance. As a result of efforts by the PAVA program, clients acquired information essential to the voting process and were better prepared to exercise their voting rights.

Illinois

Equip for Equality (the IL P&A) partnered with Chicago ADAPT, a national disability activist group, to produce a public service announcement (PSA) about the importance of voting to encourage people with disabilities to vote. The PSA, featuring a PAVA staff attorney who is deaf, was produced in sign language with English language captions. CAN TV, which has 5 local and non-commercial channels, broadcast the PSA weekly during August and September, 2008.

Indiana

Indiana Protection and Advocacy Services (the IN P&A) determined that the Secretary of State's Office lacked the proper accommodations to communicate with individuals with hearing impairments. Therefore, the Secretary of State's Office was unable to assist those clients regarding the Help America Vote Act or other election issues. As a result of PAVA's investigation, the Secretary of State's Office purchased a teletypewriter (TTY) machine to accommodate hearing impaired individuals.

Iowa

Iowa Protection and Advocacy Services (the IA P&A) partnered with the Secretary of State's office and another organization to provide outreach and opportunities to individuals with disabilities to become familiar with new accessible voting machines prior to the 2008 election. The outreach efforts provided access to the new machines for practice using real ballots and a mock election process. As a result of PAVA efforts, individuals with disabilities were better prepared to cast their votes in the 2008 election.

Kansas

Disability Rights Center of Kansas (the KS P&A) created and distributed a video flyer about the voting rights of people with disabilities. The video flyer is displayed on the www.ksdisabilityvote.org web site and the PAVA program's web site under the video tab at www.drckansas.org. Video is an excellent way to convey information to people with disabilities, particularly for those with cognitive or intellectual functioning disabilities, because the format presents information in a streamlined, easy to access form. Because of the PAVA program's efforts, members of various disability communities received helpful information in regard to their voting rights.

Kentucky

Kentucky Protection and Advocacy (the KY P&A) assisted a 44 year old man with an intellectual disability and a traumatic brain injury. He contacted PAVA staff because he wanted to vote but did not know if he was eligible. His service providers were also unclear about his eligibility. A PAVA advocate spoke with the client and his service providers about his guardianship status and other criteria determining voting eligibility. As a result of the PAVA advocate's assistance, the client was determined eligible and provided with a voter registration card and voter education materials. The client's service providers helped him fill out the card and complete the registration process.

Louisiana

The Advocacy Center (the LA P&A) helped pass legislation to increase voting options for people with disabilities. Previously, many voters with disabilities could not vote due to a lack of adequate transportation or support from staff at the polls. Neither of these were valid reasons to be allowed to vote absentee by mail. Through PAVA's work educating election officials and legislators, the law was expanded to include the option of voting by mail to all voters with disabilities.

Maine

Disability Rights Center (the ME P&A) received a complaint from a man with Parkinson's disease who requested an absentee ballot from the town clerk's office in advance of the election. To ensure the office received his ballot, the client requested the office allow a third party to deliver or send someone from the office to pick up the ballot at his home. When the clerk refused to permit either of his propositions, he felt his right to vote had been infringed. A PAVA attorney contacted the Director of Elections, Assistant Director of Elections, and Assistant Attorney General for election matters and determined Maine's election law states that a third party may be designated to return the ballot to the office. After PAVA staff intervention, the client was able to resolve the situation directly with the clerk.

Maryland

Under Maryland law, an individual under guardianship for a mental disability is barred from registering to vote. In 2008, the Maryland Disability Law Center (the MD P&A) represented an individual in a nursing home who wanted to vote but was under guardianship. PAVA staff discovered that the nursing home and his public guardian did not think a guardian was needed anymore, and filed an emergency petition to terminate guardianship which was heard and granted in time for the client to register to vote. Because of the PAVA program's work with this client, they were able to provide information to the Legislature on the impact of Maryland's blanket exclusion of voters under guardianship from the voting process. The Legislature has since decided to conduct an interim study in order to examine the issue of guardianship and voting and make recommendations to ensure that voters with disabilities are not excluded from the voting process.

Massachusetts

During a primary election in May 2008, the Disability Law Center (the MA P&A) was contacted by an individual who is blind. The client experienced difficulties voting because of poorly trained poll workers. A PAVA attorney contacted the City Clerk and assisted in the development of training protocols for poll workers in regard to the placement and use of voting machines. Following the September 2008 election, the client contacted PAVA staff to describe the improved voting experience she'd had.

Michigan

To gather more feedback from voters, Michigan Protection and Advocacy Services (the MI P&A) sent out a survey prior to the August 2008 primary election asking for a response from individuals who voted at the polls. Based on feedback from the survey, 57% of individuals stated they experienced some form of access barrier at polling places. The most prominent issue reported was inaccessibility at building entrances. PAVA staff used the information, in conjunction with surveys returned after the November 2006 election, to address ongoing issues faced by individuals with disabilities throughout the voting process.

Minnesota

Minnesota Disability Law Center (the MN P&A) worked with election administrators and the Office of the Secretary of State to recruit more people with disabilities to be election judges in the 2008 election. Members of the Secretary of State's Disability Advisory Committee discussed how people with disabilities could be more actively recruited to serve as election judges and how accommodations would be provided to them upon hiring. As a result, a few members from the blind/visually impaired community, the deaf/hard of hearing community, and PAVA staff talked with election officials about their hiring practices of people with disabilities.

Mississippi

Disability Rights Mississippi (the MS P&A) began a statewide radio campaign in an outreach effort to encourage individuals with disabilities to register to vote and actively take part in the voting process. The radio spot also reminded those without disabilities to assist people who might have difficulty with access to the ballot. The advertisement was broadcast on multiple radio stations throughout the state with an estimated reachable audience of approximately 201,235 adults between the ages of 25 to 54, not including the more than 5 other stations throughout the state on which the spot was aired. The PAVA program feels a modest assessment would be that the advertisement reached approximately 500,000 Mississippians.

Missouri

In 2006, Missouri Protection and Advocacy Services (the MO P&A) identified ten polling places as inaccessible to voters with disabilities in St. Louis County, the highest populated county in Missouri. The PAVA Coordinator examined the identified polling places during the Missouri Primary on August 5, 2008, discovered a number of issues remained, and worked with the proper authorities to address them or make sure that, per Missouri law, curbside voting was available for individuals with a disability desiring to vote.

Montana

Disability Rights Montana (the MT P&A) staff took voter registration materials to all of its outreach activities. PAVA staff participated in 40 outreach events in which 1,127 people attended and were exposed to the voting registration materials. Of note were two specific voter registrations and training events at the State Mental Health Conference and the State Hospital. PAVA staff also published and disseminated a Disability Vote publication to 3,975 people in 2008.

Nebraska

To increase the number of individuals with a disability registered to vote, Nebraska Advocacy Services (the NE P&A) conducted registration drives in mental health facilities, disability-related conferences, a variety of fairs, group homes, and nursing homes. In addition to registering voters at these locations, early ballot request forms were also available for use. All registration events were successful in registering individuals with a disability to vote, including members of underserved or un-served populations at drives at the Central Nebraska Ethnic Festival, Festival de las Americas, and the Lakota Lutheran Center.

Nevada

Nevada Advocacy and Law Center (the NV P&A) conducted a voter registration and voting rights outreach presentation at the Blind Center of Nevada in Las Vegas. Prior to the presentation, the PAVA program's materials were made available on CDs and in Braille. The outreach and presentation was attended by 38 people who were visually impaired or blind. There was a brief presentation of the Federal and Nevada Voting Rights laws as they pertain to access for people with disabilities, and a demonstration of the new voting machines. Additionally, a staff member from the Secretary of State Election's Division gave a presentation. As a result of PAVA efforts, many of those attending registered to vote and became more comfortable with the voting process.

New Hampshire

A major activity for the Disabilities Rights Center (the NH P&A) throughout the year was the continued review of polling locations and voting machines to ensure that all individuals were provided appropriate access and/or accommodations as needed to vote in the General Election and local elections. If problems were discovered, individuals were instructed to call either the Secretary of State or PAVA staff at the Disabilities Rights Center.

New Jersey

Disability Rights New Jersey (the NJ P&A) PAVA staff worked with institutional and community groups to encourage voting and ensure that individuals with disabilities have an opportunity to vote. PAVA staff conducted an annual voting seminar at North Jersey Developmental Center to encourage residents to vote and provide them with information about their right to vote. In addition, PAVA staff began an outreach effort to all of the developmental centers and psychiatric hospitals to discuss their voting procedures for the November 2008 general election.

New Mexico

Disability Rights New Mexico (the NM P&A) provided training to residents of Board and Care facilities for persons with mental illness. Most of these individuals were not aware they could vote due to multiple hospitalizations or guardianship situations. PAVA staff successfully registered 8 people to vote.

New York

New York State Commission on Quality of Care & Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (the NY P&A) provided technical assistance and training to election officials on polling site access and provided easy reference handout materials, covering polling site interior set up, parking requirements, and other election day issues. PAVA staff offered a daylong two-part lecture training focusing on proper assessment techniques, background materials, tools, and appropriate standards and guidelines. The training

included a field experience with hands-on assessments done by attendees under the supervision of trainers. Training also included the PAVA project's instructional DVD conveying proper technique and basic accessibility information.

North Carolina

Disability Rights North Carolina (the NC P&A) created materials to educate people with disabilities about their voting rights. The materials included a brochure, an expanded packet of information, a fact sheet, and a "My Voting Rights" wallet card. A comprehensive voting handbook with more complete information was created about the entire voting process, what to expect, and why voting is important. PAVA staff later refined these materials and created additional factsheets on specific topics including the laws that protect the right to vote, and how to request an absentee ballot, if necessary. PAVA staff also generated targeted handouts to better meet the needs of specific groups.

North Dakota

North Dakota Protection and Advocacy Project (the ND P&A) collaborated with the North Dakota Secretary of State's Office and the North Dakota Association of Counties to develop materials on voting rights for individuals with disabilities. Through collaborative efforts of these agencies, a script was developed, consumers were identified to participate in filming, and financial contributions were garnered to produce a DVD entitled "Voting is Your Right." Additionally, a booklet was developed to accompany the DVD and bookmarkers containing voting information were printed. All of the items were distributed to entities throughout the state in the weeks prior to the November general election.

Ohio

Ohio Legal Rights Service (the OH P&A) conducted 50 accessibility surveys of polling locations in one county. The Board of Elections intended to make all polling locations accessible with temporary or permanent fixes to accessibility violations.

Oklahoma

The Oklahoma Disability Law Center (the OK P&A) made a number of efforts to provide outreach and advocacy for people with disabilities in preparation for the presidential election. PAVA staff surveyed random polling sites to see if accommodations were being made in non-federal elections, learning that most polling sites did not have accommodations available on days of non-federal elections. As another part of the PAVA program's efforts, outreach and training events were held to establish local People First chapters and promote voting self-advocacy. Finally, PAVA staff developed legal research and potential language for retaining the right to vote in guardianships which have been established for people with Developmental Disabilities.

Oregon

Because Oregon is a vote-by-mail state, Oregon county election offices serve as polling places. Disability Rights Oregon (the OR P&A) conducted a study to review the accessibility of election offices. A PAVA attorney worked to direct funding so that county election offices could improve accessibility. As a result, one county was able to make their dangerous parking lot and route into the building accessible by repairing large holes in the asphalt and fixing uneven surfaces.

Pennsylvania

PAVA staff of the Disability Rights Network of Pennsylvania (the PA P&A) trained people with disabilities to serve as Voter Educators, who after completing a series of trainings on voter registration procedures and election law, conducted voter registration and voter education sessions at nearly 100 sites. Voter Educators conducted trainings at more than twenty human service agencies, a state hospital, and several special events, such as community fairs, workshops, and disability community social events.

Puerto Rico

The Office of the Governor/Ombudsman for Persons with Disabilities (the PR P&A) worked directly with the organization responsible for the accessibility of the voting process in Puerto Rico to improve accessibility throughout the election system. In several meetings, PAVA staff fought for alternatives to provide accessibility options in the registration process. As a result of these meetings, it was agreed that the new contract of the voting locations required full accessibility and parking for persons with disabilities.

Rhode Island

Rhode Island Disability Law Center (the RI P&A) worked to ensure full participation in the electoral process for people with disabilities in a number of ways, including facilitating voter registration and providing basic disability related voting rights and information via mail. The mailings were sent to all present and many former clients prior to the presidential primary election, notifying recipients of registration deadlines and the deadlines and process for requesting Braille and absentee ballots. The mailings also provided a voter registration form, offered assistance with registration, explained voting rights, and notified recipients of the PAVA program's Election Day Hotlines. As a result, past and present clients were better prepared to vote in the presidential primary and election and felt free to contact PAVA staff regarding any further questions or problems.

South Carolina

Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities (the SC P&A) conducted voting rights outreach presentations to people with disabilities and service providers across the state. During these presentations, participants were informed about the voting rights for

people with disabilities and then shown how to use the new voting machines. Participants were given time to practice using the new voting machine and were given the opportunity to register to vote. PAVA staff conducted 53 presentations for specific disability groups, including people with mental illness, people with developmental disabilities, people with addiction and mental illness, people with mobility disabilities, people who are blind, people who are deaf or hard of hearing, veterans with disabilities, and students with disabilities.

South Dakota

The PAVA program of South Dakota Advocacy Services (the SD P&A) conducted 9 training sessions throughout the state, training 239 people and providing 226 instructional items. During trainings and outreach efforts, PAVA staff discussed two South Dakota statutes which impact voting and of which a clear understanding is imperative for many people with disabilities in the state to vote. With the help of the PAVA program, many people with disabilities gained a better understanding of state laws impacting their ability to vote.

Tennessee

Disability Law and Advocacy Center of Tennessee (the TN P&A) reviewed and investigated voting fraud accusations at a Tennessee developmental facility. An allegation was received that workers registered a resident with intellectual disabilities to vote, even though the individual was unable to indicate a desire to vote and showed no recognition or preference for candidates. A PAVA attorney confirmed the individual had voted but did not appear to have the capacity to either indicate a desire to vote or cast a ballot. PAVA staff confirmed that a private attorney was providing representation to the individual and her guardian with regard to exploitation and voter fraud. PAVA staff also assured that the Department of Mental Retardation Services (DMRS) provided guidance to educate staff members at the facility on the voting rights of individuals with disabilities and prevent staff from taking residents to vote who lack the capacity to do so.

Texas

Advocacy, Inc. (the TX P&A) represented a woman with mental illness appealing the denial of her voter registration, as the felony conviction on which the denial was based was overturned because of her mental illness. A PAVA advocate intervened and successfully changed the county's denial policy. As a result of PAVA efforts, the client was able to vote, and individuals in similar positions will not face the same barriers in the future.

Utah

Disability Law Center (the UT P&A) sits on the state of Utah's polling place accessibility grant committee, which reviews grants from counties asking for funding to bring polling places into compliance with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). The committee

distributed funds throughout the year to County Clerks to address the issues of signage and door hardware. PAVA staff contacted each of the County Clerks to discuss accessibility and remind them of funding available to address accessibility issues through the Lieutenant Governor's office. PAVA staff have also developed a plan, spanning the next three years, in which personal visits will be arranged with each County Clerk and each of the polling places in their counties will be surveyed. PAVA staff will continue to provide technical assistance about accessibility and ensure that County Clerks understand the laws surrounding polling place accessibility.

Vermont

Vermont Protection and Advocacy (the VT P&A) facilitated an accessible gubernatorial debate at the Austine School for the Deaf, moderated by a woman with deafness in the community and cosponsored by the Vermont AARP. This was the second time PAVA staff worked successfully with Austine School to have an accessible political debate. Months of planning were involved in bringing this very successful event to fruition, including networking and educating cosponsors and the candidates about the variety of issues important to Vermont's broad community of people with disabilities.

Virgin Islands

Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands (the VI P&A) conducted a series of on-site surveys of several polling places on the islands of St. Croix and St. Thomas. The staff identified areas requiring architectural modifications and made recommendations for future outreach and training activities and for improving services to voters with disabilities on Election Day.

Virginia

Virginia's State law allows voters to obtain absentee ballots only under limited circumstances, which excluded those with mental disabilities unable to access a polling site. Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy (the VA P&A) worked with the State Board of Elections and key policy makers to educate the Legislature about the discriminatory nature of the state law. As a result of PAVA staff efforts, the state law was modified so that a person may obtain an absentee ballot if unable to access a polling site due to any type of disability.

Washington

Disability Rights Washington (the WA P&A) hosted two meetings of the voting access committee, which has representatives from the Elections Department and a group of disability advocates. The committee was formed in response to requests from PAVA staff in past years to the Office of Secretary of State (OSOS) to form a committee at the state level to address disability access issues. The group urged the OSOS to make outreach a priority in 2008, a national election year. As a result of input from the voting access committee, the OSOS recommended the HAVA Grant Advisory Group prioritize

outreach activities and offer two grant cycles of \$250,000 for 2008. Additionally, with other committee members, PAVA staff reviewed the OSOS election disability access brochure and provided suggestions for improvements.

West Virginia

West Virginia Advocates (the WV P&A) conducted “You Have a Right to Vote” trainings for the patients of two state psychiatric hospitals. The meetings were attended by approximately 140 patients and a number of hospital staff. PAVA staff spoke with patients, answered questions, and provided written information about their right to vote. PAVA staff educated patients that in West Virginia state psychiatric hospitals, it is the duty of social workers to assist patients to register to vote, complete an application for an absentee ballot, and if appropriate, make arrangements for registered clients to vote in a local precinct. As a follow up to the “You have a Right to Vote” educational trainings, PAVA staff created and distributed posters publicizing key dates in the voter registration process, election calendars, and phone numbers for the PAVA program.

Wisconsin

Good Morning America featured Disability Rights Wisconsin (the WI P&A) in a story about physical access barriers faced by voters with disabilities, such as a polling site inaccessible to an individual who uses a wheelchair. PAVA staff surveyed approximately 9 polling sites to see if any of them might prevent someone from entering on Election Day. In addition, PAVA staff queried individuals’ experiences at the polls and received emails from voters with disabilities stating that a number of polling sites which were problematic before are now accessible. PAVA staff could not locate a polling site that would not allow a voter using a mobility device to enter, so they did not provide Good Morning America with their requested story. This good news of progress in Wisconsin with regard to voting accessibility, largely due to PAVA staff, shows polling sites are more accessible today than in the past.

Wyoming

Widespread media coverage was given to the Wyoming Protection and Advocacy System (the WY P&A) PAVA program, which proactively reached out to Native Americans on the Wind River Reservation and military personnel through the National Guard and the Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee. PAVA staff used display boards at presentations, distributed informational packets regarding PAVA program services, gave Power Point presentations conveying voting and accessibility rights, gave hands-on training of electronic voting equipment, and responded to inquiries from the Office of the Secretary of State.

FY 2008 PAVA Program Allotments

STATE	ALLOTMENT
ALABAMA	\$70,000
ALASKA	\$70,000
ARIZONA	\$70,000
ARKANSAS	\$70,000
CALIFORNIA	\$404,672
COLORADO	\$70,000
CONNECTICUT	\$70,000
DELAWARE	\$70,000
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	\$70,000
FLORIDA	\$199,243
GEORGIA	\$101,611
HAWAII	\$70,000
IDAHO	\$70,000
ILLINOIS	\$142,947
INDIANA	\$70,245
IOWA	\$70,000
KANSAS	\$70,000
KENTUCKY	\$70,000
LOUISIANA	\$70,000
MAINE	\$70,000
MARYLAND	\$70,000
MASSACHUSETTS	\$71,665
MICHIGAN	\$113,352
MINNESOTA	\$70,000
MISSISSIPPI	\$70,000
MISSOURI	\$70,000
MONTANA	\$70,000
NEBRASKA	\$70,000
NEVADA	\$70,000

STATE	ALLOTMENT
NEW HAMPSHIRE	\$70,000
NEW JERSEY	\$97,639
NEW MEXICO	\$70,000
NEW YORK	\$215,648
NORTH CAROLINA	\$97,251
NORTH DAKOTA	\$70,000
OHIO	\$128,395
OKLAHOMA	\$70,000
OREGON	\$70,000
PENNSYLVANIA	\$139,209
PUERTO RICO	\$70,000
RHODE ISLAND	\$70,000
SOUTH CAROLINA	\$70,000
SOUTH DAKOTA	\$70,000
TENNESSEE	\$70,000
TEXAS	\$256,027
UTAH	\$70,000
VERMONT	\$70,000
VIRGINIA	\$84,754
WASHINGTON	\$70,422
WEST VIRGINIA	\$70,000
WISCONSIN	\$70,000
WYOMING	\$70,000
NATIVE AMERICAN	\$0
AMERICAN SAMOA	\$35,000
GUAM	\$35,000
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS	\$0
VIRGIN ISLANDS	\$35,000
TOTAL	\$34,182,219

LIST OF P&AS

ALABAMA

Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program
www.adap.net

ALASKA

Disability Law Center of Alaska
www.dlcak.org

AMERICAN SAMOA

Client Assistance Program and
Protection & Advocacy

ARIZONA

Arizona Center for Disability Law
www.azdisabilitylaw.org

ARKANSAS

Disability Rights Center
www.arkdisabilityrights.org

CALIFORNIA

Disability Rights California
www.disabilityrightscalifornia.org

COLORADO

The Legal Center
www.thelegalcenter.org

CONNECTICUT

Office of Protection & Advocacy for
Persons with Disabilities
www.state.ct.us/opapd/

DELAWARE

Community Legal Aid Society, Inc.
www.declasi.org

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

University Legal Services
www.uls-dc.org

FLORIDA

Advocacy Center for Persons with
Disabilities
www.advocacycenter.org

GEORGIA

Georgia Advocacy Office, Inc.
www.thegao.org

GUAM

Guam Legal Services

HAWAII

Hawaii Disability Rights Center
www.hawaiidisabilityrights.org

IDAHO

DisAbility Rights Idaho
<http://users.moscow.com/co-ad>

ILLINOIS

Equip for Equality, Inc.
www.equipforequality.org

INDIANA

Indiana Protection and Advocacy
Services
www.in.gov/ipas

IOWA

Iowa Protection & Advocacy Services,
Inc.
www.ipna.org

KANSAS

Disability Rights Center of Kansas
www.drckansas.org

KENTUCKY

Kentucky Protection and Advocacy
www.kypa.net

LOUISIANA

Advocacy Center
www.advocacyla.org

MAINE

Disability Rights Center
www.drcme.org

MARYLAND

Maryland Disability Law Center
www.mdclaw.org

MASSACHUSETTS

Disability Law Center, Inc.
www.dlc-ma.org

MICHIGAN

Michigan Protection and Advocacy
Services
www.mpas.org

MINNESOTA

Minnesota Disability Law Center
www.mndlc.org

MISSISSIPPI

Disability Rights Mississippi
www.disabilityrightsms.com

MISSOURI

Missouri Protection & Advocacy
Services
www.moadvocacy.org

MONTANA

Disability Rights Montana
www.disabilityrightsmt.org

NATIVE AMERICAN

Native American Disability Law Center,
Inc.
www.nativedisabilitylaw.org

NEBRASKA

Nebraska Advocacy Services, Inc.
www.nebraskaadvocacy.com

NEVADA

Nevada Advocacy & Law Center, Inc.
www.ndalc.org

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Disabilities Rights Center
www.drcnh.org

NEW JERSEY

Disability Rights New Jersey
www.drnj.org

NEW MEXICO

Disability Rights New Mexico
www.drnm.org

NEW YORK

NYS Commission on Quality of Care &
Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities
www.cqcapd.state.ny.us

NORTH CAROLINA

Disability Rights North Carolina
www.disabilityrightsn.org

NORTH DAKOTA

North Dakota Protection & Advocacy
Project
www.ndpanda.org

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Northern Marianas Protection and
Advocacy System, Inc.
www.nmpasi.com

OHIO

Ohio Legal Rights Service
<http://olrs.ohio.gov>

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma Disability Law Center, Inc.
www.oklahomadisabilitylaw.org

OREGON

Disability Rights Oregon
www.disabilityrightsoregon.org

PENNSYLVANIA

Disability Rights Network of
Pennsylvania
www.drnpa.org

PUERTO RICO

Office of the Governor/Ombudsman
for Persons with Disabilities
www.oppi.gobierno.pr

RHODE ISLAND

Rhode Island Disability Law Center, Inc.
www.ridlc.org

SOUTH CAROLINA

Protection & Advocacy for People with
Disabilities, Inc.
www.protectionandadvocacy-sc.org

SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota Advocacy Services
www.sdadvocacy.com

TENNESSEE

Disability Law & Advocacy Center of
Tennessee
www.dlactn.org

TEXAS

Advocacy, Inc.
www.advocacyinc.org

UTAH

Disability Law Center
www.disabilitylawcenter.org

VERMONT

Vermont Protection & Advocacy
www.vtpa.org

VIRGIN ISLANDS

Disability Rights Center of the Virgin
Islands
www.drcvi.org

VIRGINIA

Virginia Office for Protection &
Advocacy
www.vopa.state.va.us

WASHINGTON

Disability Rights Washington
www.disabilityrightswa.org

WEST VIRGINIA

West Virginia Advocates, Inc.
www.wvadvocates.org

WISCONSIN

Disability Rights Wisconsin
www.disabilityrightswi.org

WYOMING

Wyoming Protection & Advocacy
System, Inc.
www.wypanda.com



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