

# “The Blueprint for System Redesign”

## A Plan to Bring Us Up to Average!

### Goals

**SJR 30 and HJR 28** - Implementation of the “Blueprint for System Redesign” Resolutions!

**SB 2366 and HB 3841** - \$162,150,000 New Dollars for NEW and ENHANCED services!

- 1,000 new individuals in the Adult and Children’s Home-Based Support Services Program and CILA
- Individual service coordination for every person on the PUNS database
- More opportunities for waiver services and competitive employment
- Increased service reimbursement rates
- Increased wages for direct care staff
- Establishment of Mobile Crisis and Assessment Teams
- Increased Nursing Services for CILAs
- Rate Adjustments for Behavioral Health Crisis and Intervention Services in CILAs
- Improved Overall Quality

### Strategies

- Letters, phone calls, visits to Governor Quinn and your State Senators and Representatives
- Arc of Illinois Media Events
- Behind the scenes support and communication from the Family Support Network and the Arc of Illinois

### Become a Key Communicator

- You’ll call the dozen or so Family Support Network members in your community when the FSN needs them to move to action.
- You’ll provide them with the information and sense of urgency needed to reinforce whatever materials they have already received from us.
- You’ll give them coaching as you are comfortable, connecting with us for more information as you need it.
- You’ll update your team’s contact information as needed.
- You’ll alert the FSN to other potential members in your community.

## **What We'll Do to Support You**

- We'll provide you with a contact list of approximately a dozen FSN members in your local area.
- We'll provide you with information and training opportunities to build skills and courage.
- We'll provide you with all the information you need to encourage your team to action.
- We'll coordinate behind the scenes with policymakers and other organizations for our success.

## **Helpful Websites**

**Family Support Network:** <http://www.familysupportnetwork.org>

**Arc Action Center:** <http://congress.nw.dc.us/thearc/home/>

**Illinois LifeSpan;** <http://www.illinoislifespan.org/>

**Illinois General Assembly:** <http://www.ilga.gov/>

**Illinois Board of Elections:** <http://www.elections.il.gov/DistrictLocator/AddressSearch.aspx>

**To review the PUNS form in preparation for a meeting with your Independent Service Coordination (also known as Pre-admission Screening) Agency in your area:**

<http://www.dhs.state.il.us/mhdd/dd/pdf/forms/PUNS%20Form%20English.pdf>

**Partners in Policymaking "Making Your Case" free on-line training.**

<http://www.partnersinpolicymaking.com/makingyourcase/>:

**This course has been created to give you the critical skills you need to make a difference through advocacy. When you complete this course, you will be able to:**

- ✔ Tell your story in writing and in person;
- ✔ Identify the policymakers who can help bring about the changes you need;
- ✔ Write effective letters and e-mails;
- ✔ Conduct productive meetings with policymakers;
- ✔ Give effective testimony and answer questions; and
- ✔ Organize with others to tackle community issues.

# SAMPLE LETTER

The Honorable Patrick Quinn  
207 State House  
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Date

Dear Governor Quinn (or Representative or Senator),

**State what action you would like the legislator to take.**

As you consider your budget for Fiscal Year 2009, please remember the thousands of people with developmental disabilities that are struggling to survive without desperately needed supports and services.

I am writing today to ask you to include \$162,150,000 dollars in next year's budget.

**Tell your personal story.**

Paint a word picture of your family. How does the above situation affect your family or people you know and love? Give specifics of what is happening in your family. Stick to only those things that apply directly to the issue at hand. Don't make stuff up.

Do share your nightmare. Do share your dream.

If the legislator does what you are asking, how will that affect your family? If not, how will that affect your family?

**Sum up what you are asking for.**

In 2 or 3 sentences, clearly, concisely, and passionately restate the issue, the action you are requesting, and why.

**Conclusion. Offer to provide more information if needed.** And thank the legislator for their attention and support.

Sincerely,

Your signature  
Home Address  
Hometown, IL Zip Code  
Home phone number  
E-mail address

## How to Build Relationships!! It's All About Relationships!

Build long term relationships with legislators and key staff	Find the goodness in everyone... even people with who you disagree.
Be their "go to" person on disability	Know that we're the experts but don't be a know-it-all
Offer solutions	Confess flubs and fix them.
Do the dirty work – incredible opportunities come from these moments	Write thank you notes
Be at every table you can stand to be at as often as you can stand it. (The most boring meetings are where some of the most wonderful stuff happens.)	Organize other parents
Be constructive	Join the Arc and FSN
Be helpful	Volunteer for campaign work
	Give money

## Building a Relationship with Your Legislator

**Every season is an important season for impacting the lives of our children with disabilities.** Legislators are particularly open to hearing our stories, and they need your help. There are several steps you can be taking to make your voice stronger and 'heard' above the crowd.

**Invite your legislative candidates to meet with you** and your advocacy group in order to hear their views and educate them on yours. You may already be involved with an organized advocacy group. If not, you can gather together other people by looking across your life at friends you have made. Look around your community for other organizations that would be interested in joining with you. Your local Autism Society, Downs syndrome group, or parent support group are a perfect place to start. Or call the Family Support Network. We will help you connect with other families in your area.

**Pick a candidate to support and do so with your time and/or money.** Giving time and money moves you to a whole new level of attention with a legislator.

**Volunteering your time** is very effective. Just call the candidate's Campaign Headquarters and asks to speak to his campaign manager. (Call information and ask for 'Joe Candidate's' Campaign Headquarters) You should be able to work out some way to assist that fits both your candidate's needs and your life. You'll probably have a lot of fun.

At a minimum, you can offer to put one of your candidate's signs in your yard. **Every assistance you can give is very important to your candidate and makes you more important to him in the future.**

Please remember that the Family Support Network is ready to give you any assistance we can, including connecting you with other families and advocacy groups and helping you locate information so that you can contact you legislator comfortable in the knowledge that you are ready to advocate intelligently for your child.

## Contacting your State Legislator by Personal Visit

Taking the time to make a personal visit with your legislator can demonstrate to them how deeply their constituents care about an issue. You can visit your legislators in their district offices or, during the legislative session, at the capitol in Springfield.

### **Before the visit:**

- Learn basic information about your legislator. You can check for this on the Internet by visiting the General Assembly website [www.ilga.gov](http://www.ilga.gov).
- If you are visiting a district office, it is best to call ahead and make an appointment.
- If you are visiting in Springfield and find yourself unable to make an appointment, you may summon your legislator off the floor by going to the third floor of the capitol and handing a note to the doorman requesting to speak with your legislator. Include your name and home town, and association you are representing, if any.
- Go in a group of two to three people, having decided beforehand who will say what.
- Have a one-page written statement about your position to present to your legislator. Bullet points are best.
- Your legislator may not have a lot of time. Don't take it personally, and be prepared to be brief and concise.

### **During the visit:**

- First, introduce yourself. Identify yourself as a constituent and point out any connection you may share with your legislator, such as a common school or church. Present your written statement.
- If your legislator has supported your cause in the past, show your appreciation.
- Be clear about what you want your legislator to do. Identify the bill number.
- Be courteous and respectful.
- Try to get a specific commitment.

### **After the visit:**

- Report your experiences to others working on your issue.
- Send a brief note thanking your legislator for their time.
- Keep track of your legislator's actions and follow up with a letter expressing thanks or disappointment. You can check the status of a bill at the General Assembly website [www.ilga.gov](http://www.ilga.gov).

## How to Contact Your State Legislators A Constituent's Guide



Provided by the office of:

# **Kathy Ryg**

## **State Representative ~ 59<sup>th</sup> District**

50 Lakeview Pkwy., Suite 114 ~ Vernon Hills, IL 60061

(847) 680-5909 ~ [kathy@kathyryg.org](mailto:kathy@kathyryg.org)

## Identifying your State Legislator

You can learn who your legislators are by contacting your village hall, the local library, or going on the internet at [www.ilga.gov](http://www.ilga.gov) – follow the “Legislator Lookup” link under the heading “Additional Resources.” After you have their names and contact information, find his or her website to gather further information.

You can find a legislator’s website using a search engine and looking up: “State Senator John Doe.” You can also view the legislator’s biography, committee assignments and list of sponsored bills at the General Assembly Website: [www.ilga.gov](http://www.ilga.gov).

## Contacting your State Legislator by phone

You can call your legislator either at their district office or, during the legislative session, at their office in Springfield. The Springfield office switchboard can be reached at 217-782-2000. Expect to speak not to your legislator but to a secretary or staff member, often the legislative aide. They will relay your message to the legislator. You may also find yourself speaking to the legislator directly.

- Introduce yourself by name and identify yourself as a constituent. Provide your address and telephone number if it is requested. Identify the bill by name and number.
- If your legislator has supported your cause in the past, show your appreciation.
- Briefly explain your position and how you would like your legislator to vote.
- Remember to always be courteous and respectful.
- If additional information is requested, take care to provide it as quickly as possible.
- Keep track of your legislator’s actions and follow up with a letter expressing thanks or disappointment. You can check the status of a bill at the General Assembly website - [www.ilga.gov](http://www.ilga.gov).

## Contacting your State Legislator by Letter

One of the best ways to influence the legislative process is by writing to your legislator. You can send a letter to the district office or to their Springfield office, addressing the letter as:

The Honorable John Doe; The Honorable Jane Doe; State Senator; or State Representative

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_

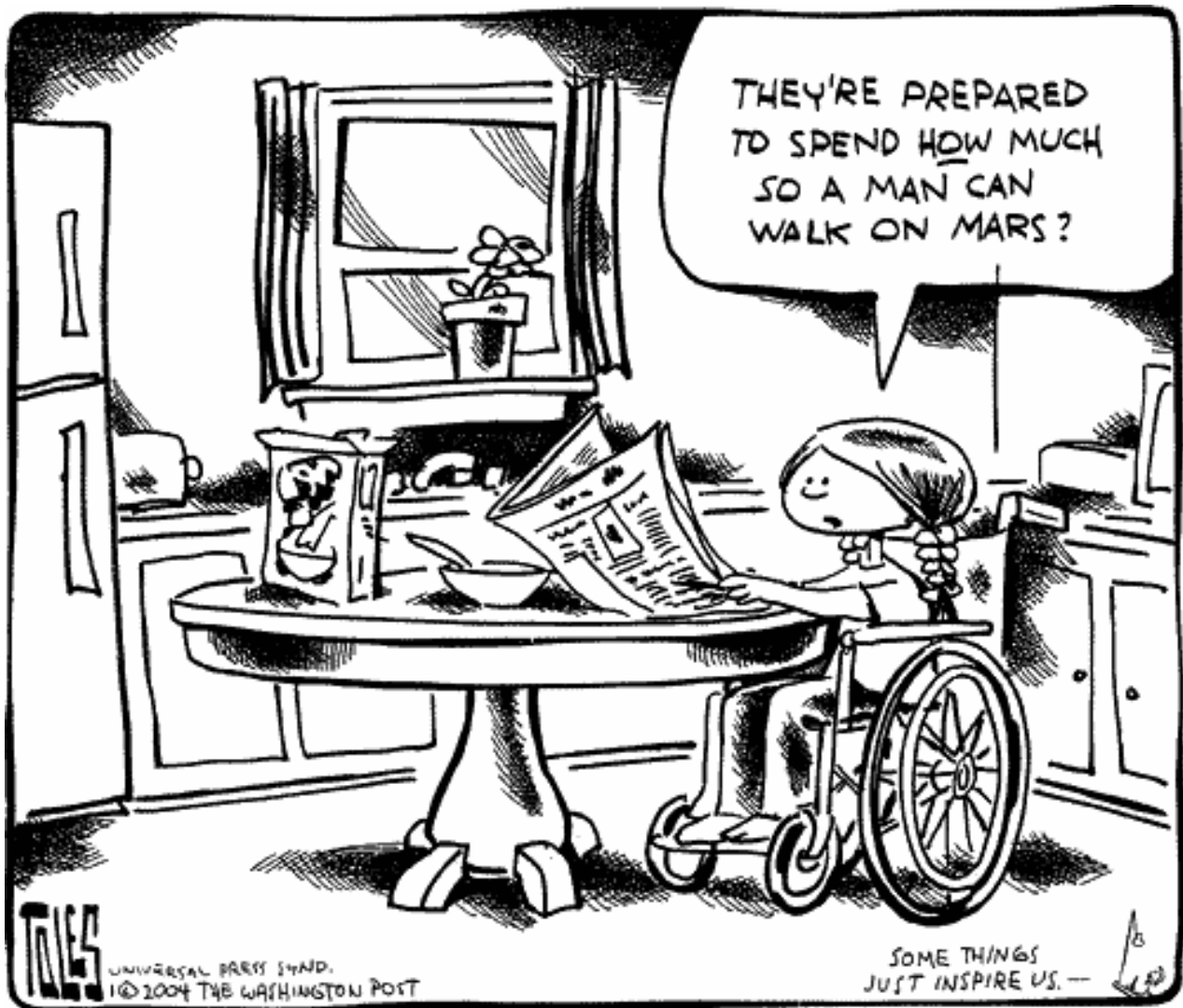
### **Tips for writing an effective letter:**

- Write legibly or type (handwritten letters are fine if they are readable).
- Include your address and sign your name legibly. Use your own words. If you are writing as an organization, use the organization’s stationery.  
*(Your legislator will want to make sure you are a constituent)*
- Make your position clear and state what you would like your legislator to do.
- Be brief and to the point. Identify a bill by number and title.
- Know the facts. Do not try to influence anyone before you have a thorough understanding of the issue.
- If possible, give an example of how legislation will affect you personally.
- Form letters or postcards are not as effective as an original letter.
- Be courteous. Even if you disagree, never be angry, threatening or rude.
- Ask the legislator to reply and explain his/her position on the issue.

### **After you send your letter:**

Keep track of how your legislator votes. You can check on the Illinois General Assembly website at [www.ilga.gov](http://www.ilga.gov). Follow up with a thank you note or a letter expressing disappointment depending on how he/she votes.

Remember to write your legislator when they do something of which you approve. Often, legislators hear only from individuals and organizations that are against something. It is refreshing for a legislator to receive something positive instead of something negative all the time.



THEY'RE PREPARED  
TO SPEND HOW MUCH  
SO A MAN CAN  
WALK ON MARS?

TOMAS

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SOME THINGS  
JUST INSPIRE US. —

## MEETINGS MATTER OR HOW TO INFLUENCE A POLICYMAKER

One of the most effective ways to influence the decisions of a legislator is in face to face visits. Frequent contacts may be necessary to gain name/face recognition. Whether you plan to meet one-to-one or with a group, plan the meeting and develop an agenda to cover the points you wish to make. The following tips will serve as an agenda.... And move you from start to finish.

- **Always introduce yourself (yes).** Even at a second or third meeting give your name(s) so your legislator won't be in the awkward position of trying to remember your name(s).
- **Thank the legislator for some good work he/she has done.** Try to find out something worthwhile in the voting record, authorship of a piece of legislation or championship of a cause. Legislators like to know that you know the record. If nothing else, thank him/her for meeting with you.
- **Identify the issue or legislation** you want to discuss. Give the topic, the Bill number, the title and the author. State your position and what you want him/her to do.
- **Educate on the issue.** This is where you tell what is right, what is wrong, and what needs to be done. Use any data and statistics you have. Talk about how people (constituents) will be affected.
- **Use personal stories.** A personal story will leave an image that will be remembered long after the data and statistics fade.
- **Ask for his/her commitment.** Ask for what you want. Get them to say yes or no.
- **Ask what you can do.** Ask if you can provide further information, set up a meeting with folks in the district, or arrange a tour of a program. Try to become a "reliable resource."
- **Leave written materials.** Fact sheets, charts, testimonials, and a list of your names, addresses and phone numbers will all be placed in the file on the issue and will be referred to when time for the vote.
- **Thank him/her again.** Legislators are very busy and taking even ten or fifteen minutes out of a day to meet with voters is time away from something else.

Fran Smith  
April 1997

# ADVOCACY TECHNIQUES

**A collection of techniques and strategies to effect change.**

**SHOWMANSHIP TECHNIQUES** are aimed at publicizing and drawing attention to the issues.

- a) Demonstrations include marches, vigils, sit-ins, phone-ins, fax-ins, sing-ins, leafleting and picketing.
- b) Demands can take the form of a bill of rights, a list of grievances, consumer needs, and/or contracts.
- c) Symbolic acts involve mock events or theatrical renditions of an actual problem.
- d) Boycotts may include non-cooperation, slow compliance, stalling, and refusal to pay for services.

**EDUCATIONAL TECHNIQUES** employ a variety of communications and media to educate the community about the issues.

- a) Fact-finding forums include citizen investigation panels, town meetings, community polls, seminars by panels, questions and answer programs.
- b) Communication avenues include booklets, pamphlets, seminars, workshops, slide shows, videos, resource guides, shows, public service announcements, press releases, speeches, consumer meetings, and posters.

**LEGAL ADVOCACY** has been a favorite strategy of nearly every social change movement in America.

- a) Legal rights advocacy includes law suits, legal memoranda, legal rights booklets for lay citizens, civil rights statements, legal advice, legal representation at fair hearings and/or other negotiations.
- b) Lobbying for legislative change or administrative policy change includes public statements, phone calls, petitions, alternative plans, telegrams/mailgrams, and letter writing campaigns. (Note: sending copies of letters to supervisors, legislator, monitoring bodies and/or other key organizations and individuals can have powerful political effect.)

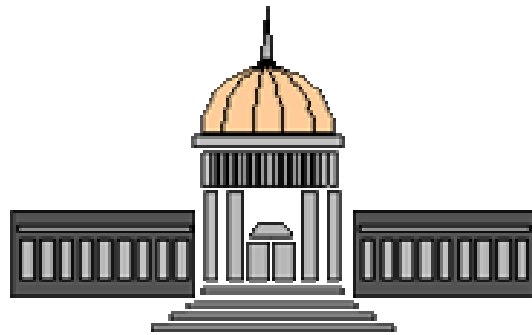
Fran Smith  
February 1997

**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES CALLING FOR REAL FREEDOM IN ILLINOIS**

*Disability Advocates Rally at the Capitol*

# **FREEDOM QUEST RIDE & RALLY '09**

**Decrease the PUNS Waiting List  
Increase Community Supports  
Create Truly Person Centered Services in Illinois!!!**



**Thursday**

**MAY 21, 2009**

Capitol Building, Springfield, IL

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10:00 Freedom Quest Caravan Arrives

11:00 Rally in the Rotunda

Across the Day Information and Handouts in the Rotunda

Across the Day Visits with Your Legislators

To Be Announced Press Conference – Limited Room – Invited Participants Only

**Bus and Rideshare Information at [www.illinoislifespan.org/forums/](http://www.illinoislifespan.org/forums/)**

**More information and handouts at [www.familysupportnetwork.org](http://www.familysupportnetwork.org)**

For More Information Contact:

Sarah Castle  
(217) 493-5445

[sarah@realchoiceinillinois.org](mailto:sarah@realchoiceinillinois.org)

Register for the Rally at:

Autism Society of Illinois  
[www.autismillinois.org](http://www.autismillinois.org)



**Free online support & resources  
Specifically for parents of teens or adults and others who care**

**Focus on parent-driven innovative solutions to the challenges of:**

**Puberty and Health  
Transition  
Employment or Day Programming  
Housing  
Transportation  
and more...**

***Join us today and get connected!***

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