



# Governor's Committee on Disability Issues & Employment

July 2008

Doc. #08-006-A

## Broad array of members

The Governor's Committee on Disability Issues & Employment (GCDE) operates under Executive Order 87-08, which directs it to serve as an advocate for citizens with disabilities; to advise the Governor, Legislature, state agencies, businesses and others on disability-related issues; and to develop policies, projects and programs aimed at empowering people with disabilities.

Members are appointed by the Governor to ensure diverse representation and comprehensive expertise on issues important to people who have disabilities. Members include people with disabilities, family members of people with disabilities, an advocate for people with disabilities, or an employee or volunteer of another disability organization. The committee meets three times a year and requires sub-committee participation from all of its volunteer members.

## Involved in seven national and state policy initiatives

### Policy development

The committee participates in seven state and national policy-development efforts on topics such as evaluating the disability ramifications of the 9/11 Task Force report; life-safety standards for high-rise buildings; design and scoping standards for emergency evacuation devices; industry standards for disability transportation issues; harmonizing the disability provisions of state building codes, the International Building Code and the ADA Access Standards; development tools to forecasting ADA paratransit demand; strategies to better integrate Ticket to Work into WorkSource services; and best practices in operating accessible bus services and community transit planning.

## Promotes legislation to improve the lives of people with disabilities

### Legislation

Each legislative session, the committee identifies and analyzes legislative proposals that would have significant effects on people with disabilities, and works with sponsors and other interested parties to build an understanding of those potential effects.

### Programs, projects, activities

**Plan to Work** ~ A \$786,000, three-year grant from Social Security to help working-age beneficiaries use work incentives, benefits and resources to improve their lives through work.

**Disability Program Navigator** ~ A \$1,075,000, two-year grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to improve WorkSource services and outcomes for job seekers with disabilities.

**Youth leadership forum** ~ An annual event for high school students with disabilities to attend a week of leadership development, career planning and advocacy training.

## Helps people with disabilities improve their lives through work

**Provides  
information  
about disability  
issues**

***Governor's awards program*** ~ Recognizes employers for outstanding contributions to improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities. The breakfast awards program annually hosts more than 300 honorees and guests. In 2007, the event was fully underwritten by Microsoft and Dole.

***Community outreach*** ~ The committee gets information to and feedback from people with disabilities, family members, advocates, service providers, local officials and others. From October 2006 through September 2007, the committee provided more than 800 items of disability-related information and resources to 1,000 subscribers.

***Able job seekers*** ~ The committee provides employers with a single point of contact for issues related to recruiting or employing people with disabilities.

**Contacts**

*Toby Olson, Committee on Disability Issues & Employment, 360-438-3168*  
*Jennifer Peppin, Communications Office, 360-902-0904*