

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

DELEGATE JUSTIN D. ROSS
CHIEF DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

ANNOUNCES HOUSE BILL 281 TO RECOGNIZE OCTOBER AS DISABILITY HISTORY AND AWARENESS MONTH

- WHO:** Delegate Justin D. Ross, Chief Deputy Majority Whip
- WHAT:** Delegate Justin Ross has introduced legislation that will establish the month of October as Disability History and Awareness Month in Maryland. HB 281 encourages schools to educate students on the history of disabilities and promote knowledge and understanding of disabilities and those affected by them.
- WHEN:** Maryland Developmental Disability Day
Wednesday, February 25, 2009
1:00 pm
- WHERE:** Health and Government Operations Committee Hearing Room
Casper R. Taylor House of Delegates Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401
- WHY:** Maryland is proud to recognize a vast array of cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity programs in our schools, yet no such programs currently exist for disabilities. Disability History and Awareness Month will add to the diversity of our children's learning environment.

Vast Support in the Community: The legislation has gained vast support in the disability and education communities. The March of Dimes, the ARC of Maryland, Melwood, Cross Disability Rights Coalition, the Maryland School for the Blind and other organizations have endorsed this bill. The Maryland State Teachers Association is in support of the bill as well.

A National Movement: Establishing disability awareness is part of a national movement. New York, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho and many other states have disability awareness programs. Over 95,000 people live with developmental disabilities in Maryland. While this bill requires zero dollars it will go a long way to promote education and understanding in k-12 schools and Higher Education Institutions in Maryland.

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