Nicky’s Law:

Review and Advocacy
Preparation for the 191st Legislative Session

Maura Sullivan, Director of Government Affairs
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An act to protect individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities from abuse

Bill FACTS

- The bill creates a registry and requires that the names of persons substantiated of abuse, against an individual with I/DD, be placed onto this registry.
- The abuse finding is issued by the DPPC
- The registry is for DDS or DDS funded providers only (expansion planned)
- This registry pertains to the adult service system
- Providers cannot hire a person on the registry
- S 71 Sponsor: Senator Michael Moore
- H 101 Sponsor: Rep Linda Campbell
History of the legislation

- Abuse against Nicky
- Family pursues system change through lawmakers
- The Arc of Mass works with task force and stakeholder community on a mandatory registry
- Senator Moore takes the lead and after over 1 year of due diligence with agencies and stakeholders across the state, language is drafted with the help of Senator Moore’s legal team.
- Rep Campbell files on the House side
- The Arc begins advocacy campaign, #1 Arc priority, the bill takes on Nicky’s name
One family, the power of community and the process…

- Nicky’s Law passes through the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities
- Dana’s law
- Senate Ways and Means, due process amendment
- Unanimous passage through the Senate
- Log jam in the House
- Potential for informal
Informal session, opposition and strategy

- Informal session support is strong, Chair Khan and others
- Globe notes Nicky’s Law in top 3 bills for Beacon Hill to pass during informal
- Lack of movement
- Over 2,000 letters generated, half a dozen media stories, daily advocacy, meetings and work with leadership in the House, Vigil
- Unions, CPCS concerns
- Disability Law Center plays a critical role
- Letter from CPCS derails hope of passage in the informal
- Negotiation and collaboration with CPCS (The Arc, DLC, House leaders)
New session, huge support!

- 108 cosponsors
- Final version of bill ready with minor changes
- Active stakeholder support in the thousands
- Early hearing in front of Children Families and Persons with Disabilities
- Early in session meetings with Chairs and leadership, #1 Priority of The Arc and AFAM, other organizational support
- Tightening up due process
- Chair Khan and Chair Chang Diaz
- April 30th
Hearing Preparation

- Engage your legislator (NEW ones to be fully educated by you)
  - Let them know you are providing testimony
  - Are they a cosponsor?
  - Tell them your story
  - Ask them to speak to chairs and members of the committee
  - Ask them to make this bill their priority to move early in session
  - Hold them accountable by following up
Check out the Nicky’s Law Webpage for Fact Sheets and link to current bill:

www.thearcofmass.org/abuseregistry
Written and oral testimony

- Address to the Chairs and the entire committee
- Thank them for the opportunity to come before them
- Keep your testimony BRIEF! Try for 2 minutes, 3 minutes MAXIMUM
- How does your personal, family or professional experience support the need for this bill’s passage
- Don’t worry about getting all the facts of the bill or what happened last session, just tell your story
- If a question comes from the committee that you can’t answer, you can refer to The Arc for a response

Tips for effective testimony
Year round advocacy - gear up and stay the course...

- Perseverance
  - Emotions are high!
  - MOST bills need more than one session to pass, we are in good shape!
  - 108 cosponsors, media attn, dedicated Sponsors and legislators

- Process
  - From here to Ways and Means both Senate and House
  - Pass both chambers, ratified and on to Governor
Nicky’s Law
Protecting the safety and dignity of

The Arc
Massachusetts

questions