

Transportation Barrier Removed

The Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) released a press release following an announcement to its partner organizations on January 10, 2008. (Excerpt)

Today the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA) released a landmark decision concerning the right of individuals with disabilities to travel by air without having to pay for a second seat, for an attendant or other use, to accommodate their disability. In a historic decision in the "One Person, One Fare" case, the agency has recognized the right of these individuals to have access to a second seat when traveling by air in Canada without having to pay a second fare.

"Canadians with disabilities are celebrating today," said Pat Danforth, Chairperson of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities Transportation Committee. Joanne Neubauer, one of the principal complainants in the case, agreed. "We hope that this decision sends a strong message to all transportation carriers," she said. "Access is the rule."

The CTA decision acknowledged the importance of a number of established human rights principles underlying the arguments of the complainants in the case, noting that these principles dictate that persons with disabilities have the same rights as others to full participation in all aspects of society and that equal access to transportation is critical to their exercise of that right.

Disabled Canadians said the decision had the potential to make an enormous difference in their lives. "This is about independence," said Sandra Carpenter of the Centre for Independent

Living in Toronto. "It's about our ability to be part of Canadian society and to have barriers to our participation removed."

"We have been looking for some good news in the transport industry for some time," said Claredon Robicheau, a member of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) Transport Committee. "This decision gives us enormous hope that we are once again moving to build an accessible and inclusive Canada."

Education for Life Bursary: Apply Now!

If you have a disability and plan on upgrading your education as a first-time, post-secondary student this fall, we encourage you to apply for ACCD's Education for Life Bursary. Bursaries range from \$300 to \$800, and last year ACCD awarded bursaries to seven students from across the province.

Applications are due on June 30, 2008. Details and an application form can be found on the ACCD website at www.accd.net. Or you can contact us at the ACCD office by calling (780) 488-9088 in Edmonton or toll free at 1-800-387-2514. We look forward to hearing from you!



Joel Wyngaarden, 2007
Bursary Recipient

Fun for the Whole Family! ACCD's All Star Hockey Fun-Raiser

Looking for something to do this Family Day weekend? ACCD invites you to take in the ever-popular All Star Hockey Fun-Raiser! Come cheer on the Eskimos Alumni and the Edmonton Police Faded Blues with help from the U of A Pandas as they battle it out at the Clare Drake Arena!

**Monday, February 18, 2008
Clare Drake Arena, U of A
Edmonton 1:30 p.m.**

Tickets are just \$8.00 each or \$32.00 for a family. Call Tammy at 488-9088 in Edmonton or toll free at 1-800-387-2514 in the rest of Alberta. We look forward to seeing you there!



ADF Recommends Annual Increase to AISH

On January 21, the Alberta Disabilities Forum (ADF) Low Income working group addressed the provincial Cabinet Policy Committee in an attempt to encourage the government to consider annual increments to AISH program benefits. The Policy Committee is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations on policies, programs, and legislation and for hearing public and private submissions pertaining to a variety of issues, including disability issues.

Low income committee member, Connie Nelson, felt cautiously optimistic after the meeting. She said, "Working group members gave a succinct, well planned presentation, and I felt the policy committee listened carefully and thoughtfully to our message. Minister Melchin commented on the amount of work ADF accomplishes with its limited resources."

ADF Provincial Coordinator, Melita Avdagovska, began the presentation with an introduction to ADF's mandate and to the need for annual increments to the AISH benefit. Edward Salé talked about annual increases in housing costs, Brian Laird addressed the issue of transportation and medical costs,

and Paula Murphy spoke about the costs of food and clothing. After the presentation, ACCD's Executive Director, Bev Matthiessen urged the committee to act on the following three recommendations:

1. Alberta Disabilities Forum members urge the Government of Alberta to recognize, in principle, the critical importance of an annual increase in the Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped benefit rate, including the modified AISH benefit rate.
2. Alberta Disabilities Forum members urge the Government of Alberta to increase the AISH benefit rate annually, by an increment of no less than the increase in the cost of living.
3. Alberta Disabilities Forum members recommend that the Government of Alberta establish a permanent body of equal representation from stakeholders such as elected officials, government representatives, and AISH recipients. We recommend that this body conduct annual (rather than bi-annual) income support amount reviews, and that it establish a process for annual adjustment of the AISH benefit.

ACCD, along with ADF, looks forward to hearing back from the Cabinet Policy Committee, and we are hopeful that our recommendations will be taken to heart.



Together, We Hold The Power!

Full Participation - Accessibility - Equity