



# 504 DEMOCRATIC CLUB

*The First Democratic Club in the Country Focusing on Disability Rights*

## **SUPPORT EPIC EXPANSION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

We have been advocating for full EPIC eligibility for people with disabilities under the age of 65 for years. This year, there is a move afoot to expand EPIC only to those younger disabled New Yorkers with incomes 200% of the federal poverty level. This proposal was voted on at the March 2007 NYFAHC (New Yorkers for Affordable Health Care) meeting.

The proposal was subsequently discussed at the March 2007 **DIA** (Disabled in Action of Metropolitan New York) where people who are actually affected by the 200% federal poverty level were present. Unlike those at the NYFAHC meeting where most members seem to be from agencies/programs that serve Medicaid or Medicaid/Medicare (duals) populations.

At the DIA meeting, the consensus was not to accept a lesser eligibility level for people with disabilities. Does anyone remember DRIE (Oh, this is just a start - we'll work on parity next year. Smell the coffee, that was 2005, it is 2007 and we're still waiting!)

**A Motion in support of full parity was carried unanimously at the 504 Democratic Club March 12 meeting.**

I'm looking forward to the donut hole before selling out the rest of our community.

**NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US! Edith Prentiss, President, 504 Democratic Club & 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, DIA**

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I have been working for full EPIC parity with seniors for many years. The money exists for full expansion. The 200% of federal poverty level may or may not include people who have been advocating for this full along. It is an insult to the Disabled Community to accept less than full parity with seniors.

There are bills in both houses in Albany for full parity at this time:

**Assembly Bill 5178** (60 Sponsors) (Last session advanced to Ways and Means)

**Senate Bill 2644** (Last session had 26 Majority sponsors) (Last session advanced to Finance)

The Senate Minority also has a bill for full expansion for EPIC for the Disabled - with widespread support.

I encourage all to support these bills above, and not the very low end capitulation bills that NYFAHC seeks to introduce. Please get in touch with ALL your Albany contacts on this issue, and emphasize that you want **EPIC expansion to the Disabled with FULL PARITY with seniors.**

In the past, the Statewide Senior Action Council, and NYSARA have always supported full parity.

I know you all remember that we were promised that Part D was just a start, and that DRIE was just a start. DO NOT support anything less than full parity. – **Norman Rosenthal, 504 Democratic Club Board Member**