

# OCTF Medicaid and Legislative Watch Committee Meeting

**Date:** December 18, 2025

**Attendees:** Bill Loyd (Chair), Paula Connolly, Andria Pooley (Staff Support), Laura Leise (Iowa HHS)

## Iowa Disability Policy Alliance (IDPA)

- Bill provided an overview of IDPA, a coalition coordinating shared disability policy priorities.
- IDPA's current priority areas are:
  - Employment of people with disabilities
  - Medicaid and community-based services (children and adults)
  - Education protections
- The Olmstead Task Force is a member of IDPA, with Bill serving as its representative.
- IDPA emphasizes storytelling and relationship-building with legislators as core advocacy strategies.

## Legislative Advocacy and Relationship-Building

- The committee discussed maintaining a shared list of disability-related advocacy days (“Hill Days”) in Des Moines.
- Members were encouraged to attend legislators’ local coffees, town halls, and community events.
- Paula shared an example of inviting a legislator to spend time with her family to better understand caregiving demands; this was described as highly effective.
- Consensus: personal stories and face-to-face interactions are among the most effective advocacy tools.

## Legislative Priorities and Monitoring

- **Employment:** Continued support for “Work Without Worry” and the DD Council’s “Let Us Work” campaign.
- **Education:** Ongoing concerns related to access and protections.
- **Medicaid:** Continued monitoring of potential changes affecting eligibility, services, workforce shortages, and provider rates.

## **Inviting Legislators to Task Force Meetings**

- Bill raised the idea of inviting legislators to future Task Force meetings.
- Paula recommended inviting chairs and ranking members of relevant Health and Human Services and administrative committees to ensure balanced representation.
- Bill will identify contacts and conduct outreach.
- Andria noted that Lee Grossman is scheduled to attend a February meeting.

## **Calls to Action**

- Bill will continue distributing advocacy alerts as they are received.
- Members were encouraged to respond to calls to action, recognizing that persistence is necessary.

## **Olmstead Plan Update (HHS)**

- Laura Leise shared that the Olmstead Plan is targeted for publication in January.
- Annual reporting is built into the plan; quarterly reporting was discussed but deemed unrealistic.
- Plan is currently with HHS Communications team

## **Data and Policy Implications**

- The committee discussed using data to identify service gaps, barriers to community living, and concerning trends.
- Not all issues will require legislation; some may be addressed through policy or administrative changes.
- Early identification of trends is a key goal to support proactive action.

## **Bylaws Review**

- Bill shared that the Executive Committee has begun reviewing the Task Force bylaws, focusing on committee structure.
- Members were invited to submit feedback.
- Updates will be shared with the full Task Force at the next meeting.