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PRESS RELEASE

Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker has officially issued a proclamation commemorating Disability Voting Rights Week for Illinois.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Illinois – The Arc of Illinois and REV UP Illinois, in partnership with the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) and the national REV UP campaign, proudly announce the observance of **Disability Voting Rights Week from September 8 – 12, 2025**. This week, now officially recognized by Governor J.B. Pritzker, is dedicated to honoring the contributions of voters with disabilities and raising awareness about the importance of accessible voting.

Over 200 individuals and organizations comprise REV UP Illinois, which provides a powerful voice for advocacy, accessibility, and voting rights for Illinois residents with disabilities. REV UP Illinois is part of the national REV UP campaign, which stands for **Register! Educate! Vote! Use your Power!** The campaign is dedicated to increasing the participation of people with disabilities in the electoral process and ensuring that disability issues are fully included in political discourse.

Leaders across Illinois have united to form REV UP Illinois, a coalition led in part by The Arc of Illinois and focused on advancing voting rights for people with disabilities throughout the state. This nonpartisan initiative aims to uplift and empower the voices of people with disabilities in Illinois. Through advocacy and civic engagement, The Arc of Illinois and REV UP are working to create an inclusive Illinois that values choice, rights, and removes barriers to voting for people with disabilities.

Voting Accessibility Challenges:

The Arc of Illinois and REV UP Illinois focus on ensuring that every person with a disability can vote and that their vote is counted. Accessibility to vote remains a critical issue, with many polling places and voting procedures still presenting barriers for people with disabilities.



There are an estimated **38 million Americans with disabilities who are eligible to vote**. Nationally, people with disabilities voted at a **3.6% lower rate than nondisabled voters** in the 2022 midterm elections. Additionally, one in seven voters with disabilities reported difficulty voting.

Despite the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) being in effect for over 30 years, a **2023 study from the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO)** found that 60% of polling places still have significant barriers for people with disabilities. Common issues include inaccessible entrances, lack of ramps, poorly positioned voting machines, and inadequate accommodation for individuals with sensory disabilities.

This underscores the importance of promoting accessible voting options, including mail-in ballots, early voting, and accessible voting machines.

Call to Action:

Throughout Disability Voting Rights Week, The Arc of Illinois and REV UP Illinois call on all voters with disabilities to:

- Check their voter registration status
- Learn about accessible voting options in their area
- Plan to vote in November

While there has been progress, significant work remains to ensure that all voters with disabilities can participate fully in the electoral process. REV UP Illinois and The Arc of Illinois will continue their advocacy efforts, which are essential to overcoming these persistent barriers.

Disability Voting Rights Week serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of disability votes.

"Voting is the most powerful tool we have for making our voices heard," said Franklin D. Roosevelt, a U.S. President who used a wheelchair. "Nobody will ever deprive the American people of the right to vote except the American people themselves, and the only way they could do this is by not voting."

About The American Association of People with Disabilities:

The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) is a national cross-disability civil rights organization advocating for the full recognition of rights for over 61 million Americans with disabilities.

REV UP is a movement organized by AAPD to increase civic engagement in the disability community and improve election accessibility. REV UP was started in 2016 by grassroots disability activists in



Texas. The Arc of Illinois joined the movement in 2022 and created the REV UP Illinois coalition in 2024.

The Arc of Illinois and AAPD are 501(c)(3) organizations.

For more information about Disability Voting Rights Week, please contact:

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