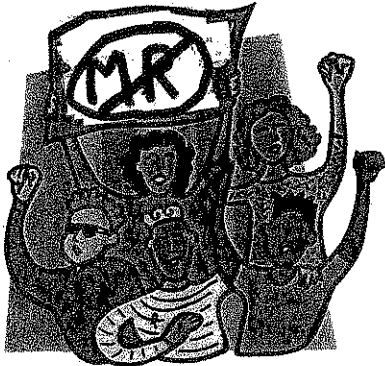


# STAND UP AND SPEAK OUT

## *CHANGE THE NAME!*

Two bills have been introduced in the Ohio Legislature to change the names of the “Ohio Department of MRDD” and all 88 County Boards by removing the “MR” word from their names (SB-79 in the Senate and HB-118 in the House of Representatives).



*It's about time!  
Ohio lags behind –  
44 states have already  
made the change.*

If you or someone you know has been hurt by mean and derogatory use of the “MR” words, and if you want to support removing these words from the state and county agency names, you can help get this bill passed.

Contact your State Senator and Representative by phone, email or personal visit and ask them to support these bills and vote for them. Tell them your story about how the words “MR” have hurt you, why you think they should not be used, and why this is important to you.

## *WE CAN WIN THIS!*

## Talking Points for the Name Change Bill

1. By referring to the “Ohio Department of Developmental Disability Services” and “County Boards of Developmental Disability Services,” it shows consistency with other statewide departments, such as the Department of Jobs and Family Services, Department of Children’s Services, Department of Mental Health Services, Department of Alcohol & Drug Addiction Services, etc.
- 1) Ohio is behind the curve on the name changes as 44 other states have already dropped MR from the name.
- 2) Society has turned the words “mental retardation” into demeaning slang that is meant as a derogatory term, hence needlessly offending those with mental retardation and their families.
- 3) This is an important issue because how we refer to the 80,000 most vulnerable citizens of Ohio is a direct reflection on not only our agencies, but on the individuals we serve.
- 4) Throughout history, titles and words have changed to reflect societal changes. In 1967 when the State of Ohio created the Department of Mental Retardation, it was common for the professionals (doctors, therapists, and yes, legislators) to refer to the intellectually disabled as “imbeciles,” “feeble-minded”, etc. Today, those “terms” are considered hurtful and demeaning, and now the term “mental retardation” is seen the same way. As society progresses, so should its leaders.
- 5) One of the major reasons some people do not want to make the change is because of the fear that people will not know who is being served by a Board of Developmental Disability Services, and that levies will fail. Since 28 years ago boards were doing business simply as Boards of MR and then Boards of MR/DD. This would discount the theory that a name change would cause levies to fail.
- 6) Ten of Ohio’s 88 counties already have changed their name to “\_\_\_\_\_ County Board of Developmental Disabilities,” but are required by law to refer to themselves as “\_\_\_\_\_ County Board of MRDD,” DOING BUSINESS AS County Board of DD.
- 7) Counties can still include the words “mental retardation” in levy ballot language if they wish. Example: “...approve additional millage to provide services, employment opportunities, and other services to those with mental retardation and/or other developmental disabilities....”