



Florida  
Developmental  
Disabilities  
Council, Inc.



Media Contact:  
Richard Bivins  
850-922-6706  
[richardb@fddc.org](mailto:richardb@fddc.org)

## -PRESS RELEASE-

For Release:  
After noon on February 14, 2018

### **Developmental Disabilities Advocates Gather at State Capitol for Annual DD Day**

**Tallahassee, Fla. (February 14)** – Hundreds of Floridians concerned about quality care and funding for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities gathered at the state Capitol today for the annual Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day (DD Day).

Hosted by the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) and The Arc of Florida, individuals, families and caregivers from around the state presented the importance of direct care services and the need for increased state funding for these services during the event's press conference.

Each speaker presented varying perspectives, experiences and testimonials, with a primary message of "Pay Fair for Care" – a cry to Florida lawmakers to consider the funding of fair wages for direct care staff. Currently, the rates paid to direct care workers are severely affecting the ability for individuals and families to recruit and retain qualified direct care workers as well as causing a decrease in the amount of available caregivers.

"The inability to find direct care assistance leads to many problems for individuals and their families," said Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC), Executive Director Valerie Breen. "With Pay Fair for Care and DD Day, we want to inspire change, allow Floridians to live meaningful lives and help people participate in the workforce."

With the statewide initiative (Pay Fair for Care) at the forefront, speakers also addressed various other issues affecting individuals with disabilities. Attendees had the opportunity to hear from and speak with legislators, visit support organizations' exhibits and connect with others for a unified voice of advocacy and change.

The event also included a flash mob with over 200 self-advocates, a performance by students from Gretchen Everhart School and a luncheon.

###

*The Arc of Florida, Inc. is a non-profit organization whose mission is to improve the quality of life for persons with developmental disabilities. Working with local, state and national partners, The Arc of Florida advocates for local chapters, public policies and high quality supports for people with developmental and other disabilities to be fully included in all aspects of their community. Find out how to get involved by visiting [www.arcflorida.org](http://www.arcflorida.org).*

*The mission of the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) is to advocate and promote meaningful participation in all aspects of life for Floridians with developmental disabilities. To learn more about FDDC, visit [www.fddc.org](http://www.fddc.org) or call toll-free at 1-888-488-8633.*