



Bob Riley
Governor



Graham L. Sisson, Jr.
Executive Director

State Of Alabama
Governor's Office On Disability

FY 2008 & FY 2009
Annual Report

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Governor Letter | 2 |
| Executive Director Letter | 2 |
| GOOD Mission/Overview | 3 |
| GOOD Strategic Plan | 3 |
| Accomplishments | 4 |
| Executive Order | 6 |
| Advisory Council | 9 |
| GOOD Fiscal/SMART Budget | 10 |
| Alabama Needs Assessment | 11 |

Staff

Graham L. Sisson, Jr., Executive Director

Graham was appointed as Executive Director of the Governor's Office on Disability in October 2007. He received his Bachelors from the University of North Alabama in Accounting. Graham also attended Vanderbilt University and was awarded his Juris Doctorate in 1990. He was admitted to the Alabama State Bar in 1990. Mr. Sisson has lived with a disability since 1982.

Rachel Laurie Riddle, Deputy Director

Rachel joined the Governor's Office on Disability in April 2009 as Deputy Director. She received her Bachelors of Science majoring in Finance and her Masters in Economics from the University of Alabama. In 2007, she received her Juris Doctorate from Faulkner University Thomas Goode Jones School of Law and was admitted to the Alabama State Bar in October 2007.

LETTER FROM GOVERNOR

This annual report documents some of the work done by the Governor's Office on Disability to make life better for our fellow Alabamians with disabilities. Alabama has almost 945,000 citizens with disabilities. Our administration is committed to increasing opportunities for those with disabilities and to tearing down any remaining barriers to equality that they may face. That's why we have refocused and improved GOOD by executive order. We've clarified its mission and enhanced its ability to coordinate with other state agencies.

I rely on GOOD to provide me with information on disability resources and unmet needs of Alabamians with disabilities. GOOD is an excellent resource for such information. If you need assistance with disability-related issues, please do not hesitate to contact GOOD.

Sincerely,

Bob Riley
Governor



LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I would like to thank the Governor and the Alabama Legislature for their continuing support of GOOD. FY 2008 and FY 2009 have been two years of positive growth and change for the office. Governor Riley signed Executive Order 43 which more clearly sets out the duties of the office. Nine local advisory committees have been created around the state to solicit grassroots input about unmet needs of people with disabilities and to increase the visibility of the office. Likewise, a State Advisory Committee was formed to provide overall input to GOOD from different persons with disabilities and disability organizations. GOOD in partnership with its advisory groups developed a new mission statement and strategic plan. The GOOD website has been updated to increase its usefulness for Alabama's citizens. Meetings have been held with other state agencies to foster collaboration and maximizing of state resources for persons with disabilities. A special thanks is given to the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services for its close partnership with GOOD.

Information about disability issues and training has been delivered throughout the state. Awareness is a powerful tool which leads to greater access for individuals with disabilities. GOOD continues its role of dispensing accurate information. Join the GOOD list by accessing the appropriate icon on GOOD's web site at www.good.alabama.gov.

In 2009, GOOD held its Inaugural Disability Summit. Its purpose was to convene major state agencies and non-profit organizations serving people with disabilities to identify resources and top issues. GOOD will use information from the Summit to facilitate strategies to help persons with disabilities.

We look forward to an even more productive year in FY 2010.

Sincerely,

Graham L. Sisson, Jr.

GOOD Overview

The Governor's Office on Disability was created by Executive Order in 1999. It was formed to serve as a statewide clearinghouse for information on disability in Alabama. Its other major function is to act as a liaison to the Governor's Office on disability issues.

The Governor's Office on Disability's mission statement was revised in 2008 as follows:

Facilitate the inclusion of Alabamians with disabilities in education, employment, housing, transportation, health care, and leisure.

Governor Riley's Executive Order 43 in 2008 significantly clarified and refined the duties of Governor's Office on Disability. Resources are scarce in Alabama. The Governor's Office on Disability seeks to maximize disability resources by identifying existing ones and fostering collaboration among public and private entities that serve people with disabilities.

The Governor's Office on Disability actively seeks to engage communication between individuals with disabilities and their families and entities that provide services to them. GOOD's web site, www.good.alabama.gov, is one tool that is being expanded to facilitate open dialogue and access on disability resources and issues. Additionally, GOOD held its first Disability Summit to bring together leaders of public agencies and non-profit organizations that serve individuals with disabilities. Common issues and resources were identified.

To foster communication even more, GOOD developed a listserv. Anyone interested in issues affecting people with disabilities can join the GOOD list by accessing the website at www.good.alabama.gov, clicking the "Join the GOOD List" icon and entering in personal contact and e-mail information. Periodically, cutting edge information on disability will be shared with list members.

Strategic Plan

(1)Legislation Initiative

Monitor Alabama's disability related legislation and policies and provide policy analysis to the Governor.

Objective 1:

Monitor constituent issues with regard to policy formulation and recommendations for legislation.

Objective 2:

Serve as liaison to the Governor on all necessary matters of interest related to the GOOD Mission.

(2)Collaboration Initiative

Establish a united voice to determine and meet the needs of the GOOD Mission.

Objective 1:

Utilize local advisory committees to determine the unmet needs of Alabamians with disabilities.

Objective 2:

Partner with public and private entities, inclusive of state agencies, that advance the achievement of the GOOD Mission.

Objective 3:

To accept and resolve referrals regarding disability issues from the Governor's Constituent Affairs Office and other referral resources.

(3)Consultation Initiative

Serve as advisor on public disability-related issues in Alabama.

Objective 1:

Provide informal legal opinions on disability issues to the Governor's Legal Office.

Objective2:

Provide analytical information to the Governor's Legal Office relative to the GOOD Mission.

Objective 3:

Act as an expert resource regarding the implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act and related laws.

(4)Dissemination Initiative

Promote public awareness of actions and activities in fulfilling GOOD Mission.

Objective 1:

Increase effective utilization of available resources for Alabamians with disabilities.

Objective 2:

Establish a website as the primary dissemination method of GOOD actions, activities and publications.

Objective 3:

Promote local and/or statewide media coverage of GOOD actions and activities when possible.

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE ON DISABILITY

GOALS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2008-2009

- I. **Inaugural Disability Summit**
 - Collaboration and Dissemination Initiatives
 - II. **Convening Disability Consumer Advisory Council**
 - 9 councils meeting twice during each fiscal year
 - 1 State Advisory Council meeting every other month during the fiscal year
 - III. **Trainings/Disability Awareness**
 - ADA**
 - In collaboration with the Alabama's ADA toll free information services conducted:
 - FY 2008-** 38 ADA Trainings and 12 Accessibility Reviews/Consultations
 - FY 2009-** 32 ADA Trainings and 17 Accessibility Reviews/Consultations
 - Emergency Preparedness**
 - Emergency Preparedness Training:
 - FY 2008:**
 - July 1, 2008- Birmingham Committee on ADA Training
 - June 10, 2008- Muscle Shoals, AL
 - April 10, 2008- Mobile Independent Living Center
 - February 14, 2008- Montgomery, AL
 - June 19, 2008- Tuscaloosa, AL
 - May 13, 2008- Birmingham, AL
 - July 8, 2008- Enterprise, AL
 - July 31, 2008- Birmingham, AL- Lakeshore Facility
 - Collaborated with Alabama Emergency Management on accessibility issues
- IV. **Information and Referral**
 - Number of inquires on disability issues:
 - FY 2008-**1024 inquires
 - FY 2009-** 881 inquires
- V. **Website**
 - Continuously Updating website
 - Updated Mission Statement
 - Continuously Updating Resources
- VI. **Collaboration**
 - Meeting with State Agency Heads
 - Mr. Steve Shivers, Dr. Cary Boswell, Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services
 - Mrs. Irene Collins, Alabama Department of Senior Services
 - Mr. Joe McInnis, Alabama Department of Transportation
 - Mr. John Houston, Alabama Department of Mental Health
 - Mr. Paige Walley, Alabama Department of Human Resources
 - * will meet with Nancy Buckner at later time
 - Dr. Don Williamson, Alabama Department of Public Health

- Mr. Tom Surtees, Alabama Department of Industrial Relations
 - Mr. Brock Long, Alabama Emergency Management Agency
 - Mr. Jim Walker, Alabama Department of Homeland Security
- *still in process of meeting with other agency heads

VII. Outside Advisory Groups - gave input on disability issues at meetings for each of the following groups:

Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities
Birmingham Committee on ADA
Blind Advisory Committee
Rural Action Commission
Black Belt Think Tank
Alabama Transit Coalition
Deaf/Blind Coalition
Alabama Ultimate Access
Home Medical Equipment Licensure Board
Long-term Care Rebalancing Committee
Alabama Respite Coalition
State Rehabilitation Council
Mass Sheltering Taskforce

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 43

WHEREAS, on March 2, 1993, Executive Order No. 52 was signed, which created a division under the Alabama Development Office known as the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Development and Compliance Section, and on April 28, 1999, Executive Order No. 7 was signed, which created the Governor's Office on Disability; and

WHEREAS, passage of the ADA by the United States Congress imposed a requirement that employers not discriminate against people with disabilities in regard to any employment practices or terms, conditions, and privileges of employment; and

WHEREAS, Congress specifically mandated that state government agencies be subject to the provisions of the ADA; and

WHEREAS, the Governor is vested with the responsibility of making executive decisions which affect children and adults with disabilities and their families, and he is keenly aware of the economic impact of disability on these individuals; and

WHEREAS, the Governor also clearly recognizes that persons with disabilities have a tremendous positive impact on the State of Alabama, its economy, and society in general, but that they may have special needs and requirements to facilitate their efforts, work and interactions; and

WHEREAS, the Governor recognizes that people with disabilities have unmet needs in many areas, including, but not limited to, transportation, education, employment, housing, recreation, insurance, personal assistance; and

WHEREAS, the Governor is committed to fostering collaboration among public and private organizations serving individuals with disabilities in order to efficiently use available scarce resources; and

WHEREAS, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) is the one state agency providing a continuum of services from birth to old age for Alabamians with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the Governor is committed to appointing effective, knowledgeable persons to those positions impacting people with disabilities, and to seeking increased inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in state programs and services; and

WHEREAS, the Governor has further need of executive coordination of input from and output to consumers and consumer-driven organizations regarding state disability policies and services and a clearinghouse for disability-related information at one location;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Bob Riley, Governor of the State of Alabama, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of Alabama, and for other good and valid reasons, which relate thereto, do hereby establish the Governor's Office on Disability, hereinafter referred to as "GOOD."

The purpose and duties of GOOD include:

- (1) In conjunction with ADRS, serve as point of contact in the Governor's Office for issues related to people with disabilities.
- (2) Collect and compile information on Alabama resources for individuals with disabilities and their families.
- (3) Serve as liaison to the Governor on disability issues.
- (4) Monitor Alabama legislation and policies that affect people with disabilities and provide information to the Governor.
- (5) Collaborate, where possible, with other Alabama public and private disability organizations and resources to increase efficiency in the use of available resources for Alabamians with disabilities.
- (6) Accept and handle referrals, regarding disability issues, from the Governor's Constituent Affairs Office.
- (7) Enter into inter-agency agreements with any State agency or organization(s) to further the purposes of GOOD.
- (8) Monitor disability constituent issues to the extent of developing, assisting in the development of, or recommending policies and/or legislation to address such issues in coordination with the Governor's Policy and Legislative Affairs Offices.
- (9) Maintain local advisory committees around the state for the purpose of determining the unmet needs of persons with disabilities and otherwise soliciting their input and reporting this information to the Governor.
- (10) Provide informal legal opinions on disability issues to the Governor's Legal Office and otherwise assist such office on legal matters related to individuals with disabilities.
- (11) Serve as a statewide clearinghouse for information on disability issues.
- (12) Prepare an Annual Report of GOOD's activities and send a copy of said report to the Governor, the Alabama Legislature, and the Commissioner of ADRS, and provide quarterly reports on GOOD activities to the Governor.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that GOOD shall be managed by an Executive Director, who shall be appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of, the Governor.

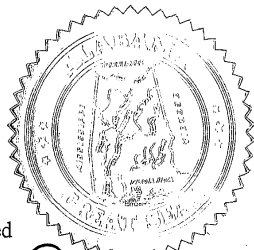
BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the Executive Director shall be assisted by a Deputy Director, who shall be appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of, the Governor.

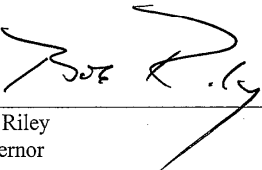
BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that all employees of GOOD, present or future, be supervised, managed and answerable to the GOOD Executive Director and that GOOD shall be housed and located within ADRS and subject to its personnel policies, rules, and regulations, to the extent available, yet will remain a separate agency.

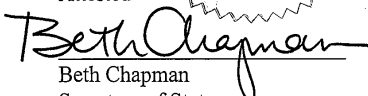
BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that if a conflict arises with regard to any previous or existing Executive Order, the provisions of this Executive Order shall prevail.

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that this Executive Order shall become effective immediately upon the Governor's signature and shall remain in effect until amended or modified by the Governor.

DONE AND ORDERED this 9th day of October, 2008.




Bob Riley
Governor

Attested

Beth Chapman
Secretary of State



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE ON DISABILITY
ADVISORY COUNCIL

Dr. Dave Martin, Chairman
Auburn, Alabama
Parent Advocate

John Stephenson
Jackson Gap, Alabama
Recreational Access Representative

Shannon Weston Byrd
Montgomery, Alabama
State Agency/Mental Illness Advocate

James Tucker
Ellen Gillespie
Tuscaloosa, Alabama
Statewide Disability Advocacy Program

Michael Davis*
Mobile, Alabama
Person with a disability

Ron Talley*
Birmingham, Alabama
Disability Advocate

Dr. Karen Dixon
Birmingham, Alabama
Parent Advocate

Karl Wade
Prattville, Alabama
Person with blindness

Carl Flemons
Somerville, Alabama
Veteran with a disability

LOCAL CONSUMER
ADVISORY COUNCILS

Councils serve as an opportunity for grassroots input from people with disabilities and their families

- Anniston
- Birmingham
- Mobile
- Dothan
- Gadsden
- Muscle Shoals
- Huntsville/Decatur
- Tuscaloosa
- Montgomery

Dan Kessler
Birmingham, Alabama
Independent Living Center Representative

Phil Klebine
Birmingham, Alabama
Person with a disability

Seth Moates
Wetumpka, Alabama
Person with a disability

Scott Renner
Montgomery, Alabama
Person with a disability

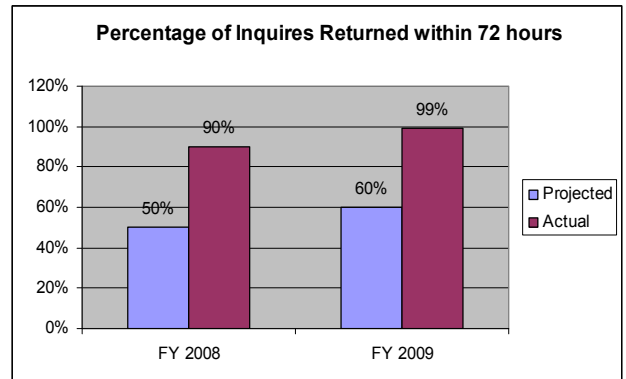
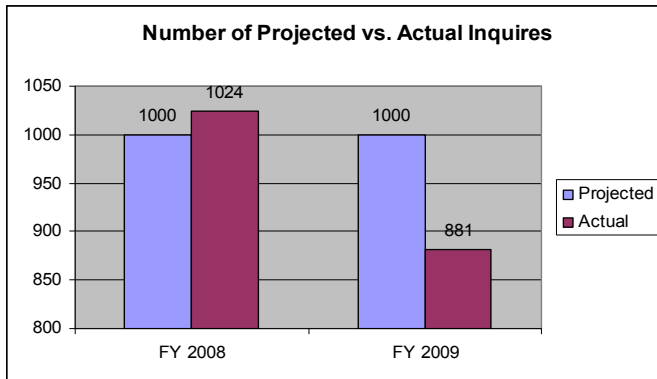
* Minority representative

FY 2008 and FY 2009 BUDGET

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Personnel Costs | 98429 | 89529 |
| Employee Benefits | 36228 | 27467 |
| Travel-In-State | 2500 | 11500 |
| Travel-Out-Of-State | 0 | 4000 |
| Repairs and Maintenance | 500 | 980 |
| Rentals and Leases | 9564 | 10000 |
| Utilities and Communications | 3600 | 3200 |
| Professional Services | 2500 | 600 |
| Supplies, Materials, & Operating Expenses | 7133 | 2500 |
| Grants and Benefits | 0 | 90001 |
| Other Equipment Purchases | 3968 | 3000 |

FY 2008 and FY 2009 SMART BUDGET

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| # of inquires | | |
| Projected | 1000 | 1000 |
| Actual | 1024 | 881 |
| # responded to within 72 hours | | |
| Projected | 50% | 60% |
| Actual | 90% | 99% |





UNMET NEEDS

Top Ten unmet needs (compiled from database of results for persons with the most significant disabilities):

- (1) Transportation
- (2) Employment
- (3) Counseling and Guidance
- (4) Medication
- (5) Equipment/Technology
- (6) Eyeglasses/Visual Aids
- (7) On-the-job Training
- (8) Vocational Training
- (9) Testing/Evaluation
- (10) Academic Training (high school, college, business school)

Based primarily on results from the 2008 Statewide Needs Assessment conducted by the State Rehabilitation Council with input from local advisory committees

Join the GOOD List
www.good.alabama.gov

The Governor's Office on Disability
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Montgomery, Alabama 36104
334-293-7228/334-293-7189
Toll Free: 888-879-3582