



STATE OF MICHIGAN
EXECUTIVE OFFICE
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

BRIAN CALLEY
LT. GOVERNOR

Contacts: Ken Silfven or Terry Stanton
517-335-6397
silfvenk@michigan.gov or stantont3@michigan.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, April 23, 2012

Governor, advocates for the blind working to enhance delivery of services

LANSING, Mich. – Gov. Rick Snyder today rescinded a recent executive order that would have transferred and reconfigured responsibilities of the Michigan Commission for the Blind and Michigan Rehabilitation Services, as he works with advocates to ensure the best possible service for residents who are blind or visually impaired.

Executive Order 2012-6 rescinds an earlier executive order that was to take effect Tuesday, April 24. Following discussions with federal officials and advocacy groups across the state, it was determined that certain outstanding issues could best be resolved by issuing a replacement executive order. The first step in doing so is to rescind the existing order, E.O. 2012-2, which was issued Feb. 24.

“We now have more time to work collaboratively with advocates and our federal counterparts to ensure that Michigan’s system is effective, efficient and accountable,” Snyder said. “We are committed to meeting the needs of Michigan residents with disabilities. I want to thank those who have been willing to work in partnership to improve Michigan’s program structure.”

Richard Bernstein, an internationally known advocate for protecting the rights of people with disabilities stated, “We continue to work toward an agreement that will protect the interests of the blind community throughout our state. I thank the governor for his willingness to work together on this process. I am also pleased that we were able to resolve our concerns as a partnership and team.”

Joe Sibley, president of the Michigan Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired said, “The governor has worked proactively to engage representatives of the blind community in a deliberative process that will ultimately result in quality services for our residents.”

That support is echoed by Dr. Fredric K. Schroeder, first vice president of the National Federation for the Blind. “We appreciate the governor’s interest in strengthening employment-related services for the blind of Michigan and his willingness to involve blind people in the planning process,” he said.

E.O. 2012-2 would have transferred the duties of the Michigan Commission for the Blind and Michigan Rehabilitation Services to other state departments, which better leverages the expertise and resources of these departments.

The full text of E.O. 2012-6 is available online at www.michigan.gov/snyder.

#####