ICBV Office Update

February 7, 2017

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**\*\*1** **Calendar of Events**

**February 9th Thursday Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm**

We look forward to continuing the **Cook County Sweetened Beverage Tax** **discussion** this Thursday, February 9th. Please see the information below:

Access Number: 312-603-2663

Conference Code: 427155

Given the volume of participants, we will not have you introduce yourself. Also, we kindly ask that you keep your lines on mute unless speaking. This discussion will solely take place via conference call.

**February 15th Wednesday 4:30 pm - 8:30 pm**

Where: ICRE Wood

What: **Karaoke and pizza party**

ICBV will purchase pizzas and a few gift cards to liven things up. We will get donations from our vendors for beverages. ICRE has been going through a lot of changes so come and check it out. This is a great chance to expand our relationship with BBS and make a very positive impact and obviously have some fun. All ICBV board members who can make it are encouraged to attend as well as all blind managers who is interested in helping relationships at ICRE.

RSVP me (Donnie) by Monday the 13th so I have an accurate count.

Thanks, see you there!

Donnie Anderson

Chairman, Illinois Committee of Blind Vendors

**February 23, 2017 THURSDAY**

9:00 AM Eastern, 8:00 AM Central, 7:00 AM Mountain, 6:00 AM Pacific

**and February 24, 2017 FRIDAY**

9:00 AM Eastern, 8:00 AM Central, 7:00 AM Mountain, 6:00 AM Pacific

OVERVIEW:

The **National Council on Disability** (NCD), an independent federal agency, will hold its next **quarterly meeting** in Detroit, Michigan on February 23-24. Interested parties are encouraged to join in person, or by phone in a listening-only capacity (other than during the public comment sessions as noted below).

LOCATION:

The Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center, 400 Renaissance Drive, Detroit, MI 48243

CALL-IN INFORMATION:

Teleconference number: 888-417-8525

Conference ID: 9110702

Conference Title: NCD Meeting

Host Name: Clyde Terry

ACCOMMODATIONS: A CART streamtext link has been arranged for this meeting. The web link to access CART on for both days is: https://www.streamtext.net/player?event=NCD

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSIONS: NCD will conduct three public comment periods during the meeting on Thursday, February 23. To provide public comment individuals are encouraged to call-in during the following times:

Topic: Education and Mental Health

Time: 11:15 to 11:45 am EST

Topic: Economic Mobility Gridlock: Systemic Challenges, Incompatibilities and Contradictions

Time: 2-2:30 pm EST

Topic: Getting People with Disabilities Out of Poverty

Time: 3:45 – 4:15 pm

NOTE: In addition to comments provided during the quarterly meeting, public comments can be sent to PublicComment@ncd.gov at any time.

REGISTRATION: To offer public comment at the February 2017 quarterly meeting your registration must be received by close of business on Tuesday, February 21, 2017. Due to time constraints, comments must be limited to three minutes. In addition to comments provided by phone, comments received via email—including comments by those who cannot participate in the teleconference—will be shared with council members following the meeting.

To register to provide public comment at the February 2017 Quarterly meeting of the National Council on Disability, please send an email to PublicComment@ncd.gov with the subject line “Public Comment” with the following information included in the body of the email message:

1. Name

2. Organization

3. City, State, and;

4. Topic or issues being addressed

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Anne Sommers, NCD, 1331 F Street NW., Suite 850, Washington, DC 20004; 202-272-2004 (V), 202-272-2074 (TTY) or write: PublicComment@ncd.gov

**April 18-21. 2016**

**NAMA and NFBEI/RSA Training in Vegas**

From Terry Smith, NFBEI - Mark your calendars now! The NFBEI and the RSA Management Group will be conducting a half-day training for Randolph-Sheppard stakeholders in conjunction with the NAMA One Show in Las Vegas April 18-21. The One Show is an amazing 3-day event that includes educational seminars, high profile keynote speakers, and the largest exhibit hall in the industry with literally hundreds of companies showing cutting edge equipment and new vend products. The RSA training will be from noon to 5:00 PM on Tuesday, April 18th.

See the following RSA agenda for their training session on Tuesday April 18, 2017 from 2-5 pm the day before the NAMA show in Vegas starts. Exact location to follow.

Topics will include:

Tips on how to increase your rebates

Latest vending technology

Showcase of new vending equipment available

Showcase of new micro market equipment and technology

Additional NAMA info:

Former First Lady Laura Bush To Keynote NAMA's OneShow 2017

**April 22, 2017 Saturday**

The Illinois Association of Blind Students, the student chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois, presents a **2017 Student Spring Seminar:** BEATING the BARRIERS

This year’s student seminar will be a full day of current and vital content for blind student success in education and life. We’ll have presentations by experts in topics of high interest to blind students, an engaging student panel, interactive workshops, energizing physical activity and more. This is a prime chance to network and share knowledge with blind students and professionals from near and far. The seminar will also include lunch and loads of valuable resources.

Here is what you want to know:

WHO? If you are a blind or low vision student, or you want to know more about and be a part of blind student life, this is your seminar!

WHEN? Saturday, April 22nd, 2017

WHERE? Holiday Inn Midway: 6624 S. Cicero Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. To reserve your hotel room, call 708-563-6490. Tell the hotel you are booking with the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois for the special rate of $129 per night (plus tax).

HOW MUCH? The Seminar costs only $15 per person. Financial assistance may be available for attendees outside Chicagoland through the NFBI Chappell-Dennis Memorial fund. Please apply by April 1,2017.

HOW TO REGISTER and/or apply for financial assistance: Please register at the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois web site. Follow the links to Spring seminar.

WHY WAIT? Registration ends April 14, 2017.

Special requests and questions should be directed to Emma Meyer at: MeyerEmma13@gmail.com . Sign up to our free listservs (IL-Talk and IABS-Talk) at nfb.org/listserv for updates and info (or to post questions or comments).

SAVE THE DATE:

**September 12-15, 2017**

**NABM BLAST 2017**

Nashville Airport Marriott Hotel

Tradeshow September 13th

Mark Your Calendars Now!!!!

Visit [www.blindmerchants.org](http://www.blindmerchants.org) for more information as it becomes available. For more information, contact Nicky Gacos at nickycolorado@netscape.net or call him at (908) 464-5359 or contact Terry Smith at terrysmith@epbfi.com or 865-599-7148.

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**\*\*2** Shared by Denise Avant, President NFBI

FYI - **News release - CTA Announces Major Milestone in $23 Million IMD Station Renovation Project** February 6, 2017

CTA President Dorval R. Carter, Jr. today announced the first major milestone in the $23 million renovation of the Illinois Medical District (IMD) Blue Line station—a vital public transit connection to one of the nation’s largest medical districts. The project is the latest in a series of recent infrastructure improvement projects announced by Mayor Rahm Emanuel to improve Chicago’s neighborhoods and transit services.

> Beginning today at 9 a.m., the Damen Avenue entrance to the IMD Blue Line station will be temporarily closed until mid-May to allow crews to make exterior and interior improvements to the stationhouse and its concourse, including upgrades to the station-to-platform ramp for improved accessibility.

The closure of the Damen auxiliary entrance marks the first major phase of project work, which will eventually make improvements to all three entrances of the IMD station, including the complete reconstruction of the main stationhouse on Ogden Avenue to make it accessible to customers with disabilities with the addition of an elevator.

“The improvements being made as part of this project will benefit the thousands of riders who currently travel through the station each day with a safer, cleaner and more modern facility,” said CTA President Dorval R. Carter, Jr. “More importantly, as a result of this project work, everyone will have equal and affordable access to this vital transit connection serving nearby medical services, schools and entertainment.”

In addition to accessibility upgrades, the project will also include improved station and platform lighting; the installation of new security cameras; and new CTA Bus and Train Tracker displays. Both auxiliary entrances will receive new flooring, wall and ceiling finishes, fare-payment equipment and customer assistant kiosks.

Under Mayor Emanuel, the CTA has made unprecedented investments in rebuilding and rehabilitating rail stations, many of which are decades old. Since 2011, more than 40 CTA stations have received major upgrades and rehabs—nearly 30 percent of the rail system. Five existing stations have received elevators to make them wheelchair accessible, with two more receiving elevators in the next few years. Three new stations have opened, with a fourth (Washington-Wabash) slated to open later this year. Two major signature station projects are also under way at 95th Street and Wilson on the Red Line.

Opened nearly 60 years ago, the IMD Station is the third-busiest station on the Blue Line Forest Park branch with more than 1 million station entries last year. It provides key connections to four major hospital systems – the University of Illinois Hospital & Health Sciences System, the John H. Stroger Jr. Hospital of Cook County, Rush University Medical Center and the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center. The station also serves Malcolm X College and the United Center.

During the temporary closure of the Damen auxiliary entrance, customers will continue to have access to Blue Line services via the IMD station’s main entrance on Ogden Avenue or the additional auxiliary entrance on Paulina Avenue, which is a ramp-accessible entry. Customers accessing the station from the #50 Damen route can transfer to the #7 Harrison (weekdays) or #126 Jackson (weekends and weekdays late evening) as an alternative that serves the accessible Paulina entrance.

CTA Media Relations

312-681-3090

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**\*\*3** Shared by John Fritchey, Cook County Commissioner

**Important Property Tax Exemptions for Senior Citizens!**

Senior Citizen Exemption applications for 2016 property taxes have been mailed to residential property owners. If you qualify, it's important that you apply for these money-saving exemptions, which are are due back Wednesday, February 8, 2017.

Any Senior Exemptions for which you qualify can reduce your property taxes, and that savings will appear on the second installment of your tax bill. NOTE: Under Illinois law, seniors must re-apply for these Exemptions every year.

There are TWO separate Exemptions available:

Senior Citizen Exemption AND Senior Freeze Exemption

The Senior Citizen Exemption is available to all Seniors regardless of income. To qualify, the property owner must have:

Been born prior to or in the year 1951,

Owned the property, or have a lease or contract which makes them responsible for real estate taxes, and

Used the property as a principle place of residence.

The Senior Freeze Exemption can provide added savings for property owners whose total household income was $55,000 or less for the taxable year 2015. To qualify, the property owner must have:

Been born prior to or in the year 1951,

Owned the property or had legal, equitable or leasehold interest in the property on January 1, 2015 and January 1, 2016,

Used the property as a principle place of residence as of January 1, 2015 and January 1, 2016, and

Been liable for the payment of 2015 and 2016 property taxes.

Eligible Seniors who have never applied for the Senior Exemptions may visit the Assessor's website at www.CookCountyAssessor.com and download an application, or contact the Assessor's office at 312-443-7550 and request that a form be mailed. If you have already received the application in the mail, simply fill out the form(s) and return to the Assessor's office.

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**\*\*4** Shared by **IAMC - Legislative Report** on the 100th General Assembly 2017 Spring Session February 3, 2017 Prepared by BP Consultants for IAMC

The attached Legislative Report includes legislation from the 2017 Spring Session of the 100th General Assembly. This report has been prepared by BP Consultants on behalf of IAMC.

The General Assembly was not session this past week. The Senate returns on Tuesday, February 7th and the House returns on Wednesday, February 8th. Please note that Friday, February 10th is the deadline to introduce substantive bills in the House and Senate.

On Wednesday Fitch Ratings, one of the major credit rating agencies, downgraded Illinois’ rating, citing the “unprecedented failure” to approve a state budget. The rating on nearly $26 billion of general obligation bonds was lowered from BBB+ to BBB which is a few levels above junk status. Illinois already has the worst rating of any state. The lower rating means taxpayers pay more when Illinois borrows money. Fitch warned another downgrade would be warranted if the budget issue is not resolved.

Also on Wednesday, the Illinois School Funding Reform Commission issued its final report that members called a “framework” for moving forward. The commission said that the state should revamp the way money is allocated to K-12 public schools, but left details of how to do that with the legislature. The report was largely devoid of numbers, although it did say the state would need to spend at least $3.5 billion more over the next decade “for all districts in Illinois to be at or above their adequacy target” and that could just be the down payment. The report included a list of topics on which the 25 member commission could not reach consensus.

At the end of the week, the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (COGFA) issued their monthly briefing. Overall base revenues fell $167 million in January. As in prior months, continued weaker income taxes along with poor federal sources more than offset gains experienced by the other revenue sources. January did have one more receipting day than the same prior year period. The poor year for gross corporate income taxes continued with monthly receipts falling $60 million, or $52 million net of refunds. Gross personal income tax receipts dropped by $57 million, or $70 million net of refunds and diversions to the Fund for Advancement of Education and Commitment to Human Services Fund. Other sources dropped $18 million in January, while public utility tax receipts fell $12 million for the month. Interest income dipped a modest $1 million. Through January, year to date base receipts are off $1.031 billion, or 5.9%. While sales tax now has managed to post back to back months of decent performance, those gains were more than erased with continued drops in both personal and corporate income taxes.

The COGFA briefing also included information on employment. Although Illinois’ job and wage figures have increased over the last several years, the growth may best be classified as disappointing, especially when compared to the job figures of other states across the nation. From a national perspective, Illinois has been slower than most in its recovery from the Great Recession. Contributing to this slow recovery is the fact that many of the jobs that have been added in Illinois have been comparatively lower paying jobs. Over the last eight years (comparing average employment pre-recession totals of 2008 with 2016), the biggest improvement in the number of jobs in Illinois has been in “Education and Health Services” (up 14.0%). However this subsector is one of the lowest paying subsectors in terms of weekly earnings, with an average weekly earnings value of $809. Illinois’ largest employer of jobs is the “Trade, Transportation, and Utilities” subsector, employing over 1.2 million people. But, this subsector also has one of the lowest average weekly earnings totals in the State (2016 average weekly earnings value of $807).

Upcoming Important Dates and Deadlines:

February 7, 2017 – Next Session Date for Senate

February 8, 2017 – Next Session Date for House

February 10, 2017 – Deadline for Introduction of Substantive House and Senate Bills

February 15, 2017 – Governor’s Budget Address

March 17, 2017 – Senate Substantive Committee Deadline

March 31, 2017 – House Substantive Committee Deadline

April 8 – 23, 2017 – Spring Break for General Assembly

April 28, 2017 – House Third Reading Deadline for Substantive House Bills and Senate Third Reading Deadline for Substantive Senate Bills

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**\*\*5** From **Cullen & Associates**, Tom Cullen

**Session Update** – February 3, 2017

The Illinois General Assembly will reconvene next week, with the Senate returning to Springfield on Tuesday and the House on Wednesday. Friday, February 10th is the deadline to introduce substantive legislation in both Chambers.

The Illinois Senate is expected to take final action on the bipartisan budget package pending in that Chamber. The Senate has continued working on a “Grand Compromise” package of bills, including an omnibus tax bill. Additional amendments are expected to be filed next week. It is expected that the package of bills will pass the Senate, but the package is unlikely to be considered in the House, as the House has not been involved in the Senate negotiations. Speaker Madigan and his caucus are working on a budget solution in the House.

In response to Attorney General Lisa Madigan’s action last week that sought to stop state employees from being paid absent appropriation authority, both House Republicans and Democrats filed legislation addressing state employee pay. Republican Representative Avery Bourne’s legislation (HB1787) would make state workers’ salary payments a continuing appropriation, guaranteeing payment during a budget impasse. Democrat Representative Sue Sherer’s legislation (HB1798) makes appropriations to pay state employees. HB 1798 has been assigned to the House State Government Administration committee and could be scheduled for a hearing as early as next week. HB 1787 remains in the House Rules Committee.

Governor Rauner’s Illinois School Funding Reform Commission released its final report this week. The report suggests a general education funding “framework” that leaves members of the General Assembly to create the new school funding formula.

Citing the “unprecedented failure to approve a state budget,” Fitch Ratings lowered Illinois’ rating on nearly $26 billion of general obligation bonds from BBB+ to BBB. Fitch noted lawmakers have failed to approve a budget for two consecutive years and spending is occurring at levels “far in excess” of what the State is receiving in revenues. Fitch warned future downgrades are likely if the budget impasse is not resolved soon.

The Governor will deliver his budget address to a joint session of the General Assembly on February 15th. At that time, the Governor is expected to present his Fiscal Year 2018 budget and outline spending priorities for the next fiscal year.

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**\*\*6** This Week **Eyes on Success**

1707 **Acting Blind** (Feb. 8, 2017)

Pursuing a career in the performing arts as a professional actor comes with a number of challenges whether one is blind or not. Even for the blind, however, these barriers are not insurmountable. Hosts Nancy and Peter Torpey talk with George Ashiotis about his career and experiences as a blind actor and how he manages to live his dream.

The audio and show notes can be found at:

[www.EyesOnSuccess.net](http://www.EyesOnSuccess.net)

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**\*\*7** From **Hadley School for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

Seminars@Hadley Presents:

**Celebrating the 100th Birthday of the National Parks**

Date: Wednesday, February 8, 2017

Time: 10:00 AM CST; 16:00 GMT

What an incredible treasure we have in our U.S. National Park System! There are over 400 national parks across our vast country ranging from large ones that include thousands of acres, to smaller monuments in urban areas. Today, we hope to encourage you to consider visiting a national park or maybe just read more about them.

Join Seminars@Hadley as panelists Cathy Pasinski, Judy Greene and Shari Burton talk about this wonderful travel opportunity and share their personal experiences in several national parks such as Grand Canyon, Rocky Mountain, Zion and more.

Dawn Turco, Hadley Senior Vice President and member of the Seminars@Hadley team, will moderate this 60-minute discussion. A question and answer session will be included as part of this audio seminar. Register now for National Parks! <http://hadley.edu/SeminarDetails.asp?sid=351>

Seminars@Hadley Presents:

Low Vision Focus @ Hadley Presents: **Knitting for Fun and Fulfillment**

Seminar Date: Friday, February 17, 2017

Seminar Time: 12:00 PM CST; 18:00 GMT

Knitting is fun, relaxing and rewarding. It’s a craft you can take anywhere and enjoy while chatting with friends, listening to an audiobook, or just daydreaming! Knitters know that special thrill that comes with holding something they’ve made with their own two hands.

Join Low Vision Focus @ Hadley as Caitlyn Snyder, Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist, and Mary Zemlick, Occupational Therapist and Orientation and Mobility Specialist, discuss how to enjoy knitting with low vision. They’ll be discussing equipment and terminology, techniques for rake knitting, knitting in the round and using straight needles. They’ll also share their expertise on where to find accessible knitting patterns and how to find local knitting groups. If you’ve ever wanted to begin or resume this wonderful hobby, this is the webinar for you!

Ed Haines, Hadley Instructor and member of the Seminars@Hadley team, will moderate this 60-minute discussion. A question and answer session will be included as part of this audio seminar. Register now for Knitting! <http://www.hadley.edu/SeminarDetails.asp?sid=352>

**Let's Be Friends!**

Visit Hadley's Facebook page to connect with other students, get the latest news on what's happening at Hadley and find relevant information on current topics in the blindness community. Connect with Hadley on Facebook.

**Seminars@Hadley Archives**

Did you miss a recent seminar you wanted to attend but the timing wasn't right? Or have you listened to all the recent seminars, and still want more? We've got you covered! Delve deep into the Seminars@Hadley archives where you'll find interesting listening on subjects ranging from cooking and travel to professional development — and much more. Visit the past seminars page at hadley.edu and settle in for an enlightening and fun hour!

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**\*\*8** Shared by John Gordon, Bureau Chief, BBS

Subject: **Representative Massie Introduces Bill to Abolish Federal Department of Education**

Date: February 8, 2017

On Tuesday, February 7, 2017, Republican Congressman Thomas Massie, representing the 4th District of Kentucky, introduced H.R. 899, a bill to abolish the U.S. Department of Education. It is too early to tell whether Congressman Massie is making a symbolic statement about local control of public education and parental choice or whether he believes he will be able to garner the support needed to dismantle the Department of Education.

Below is a link to the press release regarding Congressman Massie’s bill followed by the full text of the release:

<https://massie.house.gov/newsroom/press-releases/rep-massie-introduces-bill-to-abolish-federal-department-of-education>

Feb 7, 2017

Press Release

Contact: Lorenz.Isidro@mail.house.gov

(202) 225-3465

Rep. Massie Introduces Bill to Abolish Federal Department of Education

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Representative Thomas Massie introduced H.R. 899, a bill to abolish the federal Department of Education. The bill, which is one sentence long, states, “The Department of Education shall terminate on December 31, 2018.”

On the day of Betsy DeVos’ scheduled Senate confirmation for Secretary of Education, Massie said, “Neither Congress nor the President, through his appointees, has the constitutional authority to dictate how and what our children must learn."

Massie added, "Unelected bureaucrats in Washington, D.C. should not be in charge of our children’s intellectual and moral development. States and local communities are best positioned to shape curricula that meet the needs of their students. Schools should be accountable. Parents have the right to choose the most appropriate educational opportunity for their children, including home school, public school, or private school."

“For years, I have advocated returning education policy to where it belongs - the state and local level,” said Rep. Walter Jones, an original co-sponsor. “D.C. bureaucrats cannot begin to understand the needs of schools and its students on an individual basis. It is time that we get the feds out of the classroom, and terminate the Department of Education.”

“I’ve always been a proponent of empowering parents, teachers and local school boards who best know our children and their needs," said Rep. Raul Labrador, another original co-sponsor. "Eliminating the U.S. Department of Education is the most important step we in Congress can take in returning decision making to the local level.”

"Education of our students should lie primarily with parents, teachers, and state and local officials who know how to meet their individual needs best," said freshman Rep. Andy Biggs. "Since its inception, the Department of Education has grown into an unrecognizable federal beast, and its policies have helped foster Common Core across the country. It is time the one-size-fits-all approach by the federal government is ended and authority is returned to the local level."

The Department of Education began operating in 1980. On September 24, 1981 in his Address to the Nation on the Program for Economic Recovery, President Ronald Reagan said, “As a third step, we propose to dismantle two Cabinet Departments, Energy and Education. Both Secretaries are wholly in accord with this. Some of the activities in both of these departments will, of course, be continued either independently or in other areas of government. There's only one way to shrink the size and cost of big government, and that is by eliminating agencies that are not needed and are getting in the way of a solution. Now, we don't need an Energy Department to solve our basic energy problem. As long as we let the forces of the marketplace work without undue interference, the ingenuity of consumers, business, producers, and inventors will do that for us. Similarly, education is the principal responsibility of local school systems, teachers, parents, citizen boards, and State governments. By eliminating the Department of Education less than 2 years after it was created, we cannot only reduce the budget but ensure that local needs and preferences, rather than the wishes of Washington, determine the education of our children.”

Original co-sponsors include Rep. Justin Amash (R-MI), Rep. Andy Biggs (R-AZ), Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT), Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL), Rep. Jody Hice (R-GA), Rep. Walter Jones (R-NC), and Rep. Raul Labrador (R-ID).

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**\*\*9** Shared by Max Levensen via NFBNet

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASESAN FRANCISCO – (Feb. 7, 2017) **–** What would you do with $25,000? This year the [LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired](http://lighthouse-sf.org/) is asking blind people worldwide that very question. It’s not just an exercise, but a new set of awards designed to fund the international projects of legally blind individuals: this is **The Holman Prize for Blind Ambition**.

“The Holman Prize is not meant to save the world or congratulate someone for leaving the house,” says LightHouse CEO Bryan Bashin, “This prize will spark unanticipated accomplishments. You will see blind people doing things that surprise and perhaps even confuse you.”

[The Holman Prize website](http://holmanprize.org/), now accepting applications from blind individuals around the world, already reflects a diversity of faces and ideas:[blind podcasters from Brooklyn](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNuuuzLedH4&index=4&list=PLBgTkRMP5uaz784GjDzUKRvog4TSpAwPA), [blind skateboarders from the Midwest](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyQXU-WI-Ro&index=6&list=PLBgTkRMP5uaz784GjDzUKRvog4TSpAwPA), and blind technologists, educators and scholars passionate about taking on their own projects anywhere from Canada to Kyrgyzstan. In March, the LightHouse’s hand-picked Holman Committee will select a group of semifinalists to go through a formal application process, ultimately resulting in a few large awards to be given this summer. Applicants must be 18 or older and able to produce proof of legal blindness upon request.

For the LightHouse, putting “blind ambition” on display across social media is as much a goal as the projects themselves. Contestants are encouraged to promote their videos widely to their friends, family and followers, with the promise that the most popular pitch on social media will be guaranteed consideration in the Holman Prize’s final round.

Facebook Live Q&A:The Holman Prize is unprecedented in scope and size, and as such, the LightHouse would like to give prospective applicants a chance to ask questions and feel confident in their emerging proposals. On February 15 at 4 PM Pacific Time, Holman Committee members will host a live Q&A session on the [LightHouse’s Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/lighthousesf/).

Prospective applicants can send questions ahead of time to holman@lighthouse-sf.org, or via Facebook during the Q&A itself. To tune in to the Q&A, just head over to our Facebook page, LightHouse for the Blind - San Francisco Bay Area, at 4 PM PST on February 15.About LightHouse for the Blind and Visually ImpairedFounded in 1902, San Francisco’s LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired promotes the independence, equality and self-reliance of people who are blind or have low vision. The LightHouse offers blindness skills training and relevant services such as access to employment, education, government, information, recreation, transportation and the environment. We also pursue the development of new technology, encourage innovation, and amplify the voices of blind individuals around the world.
Links:[**YouTube Playlist: Holman Prize Candidates**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RaBef3zywxI&list=PLBgTkRMP5uaz784GjDzUKRvog4TSpAwPA&index=1)[**Holman Prize FAQ for Prospective Applicants**](http://holmanprize.org/faq)[**CEO Bryan Bashin Talks about ‘The Holman Prize’ Live on Canadian Radio**](https://soundcloud.com/user-205085650/bryan-bashin-talks-holmanprize-for-blind-ambition-with-ami-live-from-studio-5)[**Who was James Holman? Learn about the prize’s namesake**](https://www.holmanprize.org/jamesholman/)[**How blind people use YouTube: Screen Reader Support**](https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/189278?hl=en)
Other Dates:
January 18, 2017: Applications open at[**HolmanPrize.org**](http://holmanprize.org/)February 15, 2017: Q&A with Holman Prize committee on[**Facebook Live**](https://www.facebook.com/lighthousesf/)February 28, 2017: Applications close at 12 PM Pacific TimeMarch: Semifinalists announced
May: Finalists announced
July: Prizewinners announced

Press Contact:Will Butler, Director of Communications
LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired
wbutler@lighthouse-sf.org
415-694-7309

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**\*\*10** From Vending Market Watch

**Indiana Senate Committee Passes Important Micro Market Bill**

FEB 7, 2017 SOURCE: IRPA, FORMER IVC

This past Thursday February 2, the Indiana Senate Commerce & Technology Committee passed SB 77 authored by Sen. Jon Ford and co-authored by Sen. Jim Merritt and Sen. Tim Lanane. SB 77 codifies the definition of a micro market which protects the investment of all members operating in the rapidly emerging micro market segment of our industry. Micro markets have been allowed to exist in Indiana as the result of a “Governance Document” negotiated between the Indiana Department of Health and the IRPA, which was the IVC at that time. The ISDH has been very cooperative with the IRPA, but the Governance Document is nothing more than a “gentleman’s agreement” that could be rescinded at any time. A governance document does not have the force of law (either statutory or rule) and the amount of investment in micro markets has grown too large to leave to chance.

Sen. Ford introduced the bill followed by testimony from Jeff Snyder - President of IRPA, explaining the micro market concept and the importance of the legislation. There was no testimony in opposition and the committee voted 6 – 0 in favor of the bill.

"We believe we may be the first state to legislate the operation and provide a legal description of the unstaffed micro-market concept," offered Steve Beebe Lobbyist and Executive Director for the IRPA. "The implications and ramifications for having the micro-markets legally defined provide opportunities and guidelines for other states to follow suit and protect this extremely valuable new business model for our Industry", chimed in Snyder. IRPA is not at the finish line with this issue, as it must pass the full Senate and then move over to the House of Representatives and the 6-0 committee vote will go far in the minds of other Legislators

For any questions or concerns feel free to contact Jeff Snyder - IRPA President at jeff.snyder@snyderfoodservices.com or Steve Beebe - Lobbyist and IRPA Executive Director at sbeebe@the lobbyfirm.com

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**\*\*11** Shared by Claudia, RSA Management Group

The Tulsa County Sheriff is trying to change the law to get us out of the **Tulsa County Commissary**. Would you please sign the petition to say no to the Oklahoma House of Representatives?

<https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/tulsa-county-sherrif-against-working-blind>

SUBJECT: House Bills 1196; 2230; & 2278

These house bills are attempting to amend Oklahoma Statute Title VII whereby County Commissaries would become exempt from the statute; thereby removing opportunities for blind individuals to become self-supporting rather than depending on a disability check.

In 1994 in the case of Glanz v. McCray, the Tulsa County Commissioners and Sheriff lost the case where they tried to remove a blind individual from making an honest living. Now it seems they are attempting the same battle on a new battlefield.

Mike Spencer, the current blind individual operating the Tulsa County Jail Commissary not only employs his regular full time staff but also employs part-time jail detention officers.

In the year 2016 the following agencies/individuals benefited from the earnings of this county commissary:

Tulsa County Sheriff’s Department $110,492.00

Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitative Services $73,662.00

Oklahoma Tax Commission $115,016.00

Jail Detention officers & Commissary Employees $204,084.00

Aramark (Kiosk and equipment supplier) $169,060.00

Oklahoma vendors supplying commissary products $653,471.00

Mr. Spencer played OU football through two National Championships then went to work as a dock supervisor until he lost his vision overnight in the mid 1990’s and was forced to quit. He went unemployed for years until he learned of the EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES afforded blind individuals provided by Title VII.

He continues to operate Tulsa County Commissary and deliver commissary goods to inmates when he is never paid by Tulsa County Sheriff’s Department in a timely fashion.

Currently the Tulsa County Sheriff’s Department is behind in payments for goods delivered to inmates by Mr. Spencer to the tune of $ 77,000.00. Delinquent payments are very normal for the Tulsa County Sheriff’s Department but they continue to demand purchase and delivery of commissary goods which Mr. Spencer must pay for while awaits his payment.

It seems that the greed of the Tulsa representatives: Kirby, Mulready and O’Donnell and the Tulsa County Sheriff’s department is more important than allowing blind and other disabled individuals the right to earn a living and contribute to society in a positive manner.

WORKING BLIND INDIVIDUALS ARE BEING TREATED UNFAIRLY.

Mike Spencer

918-640-1807

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**\*\*12** Shared by GMA SmartBrief

**Amazon reveals top-selling snack brands**

Kind has emerged as the best-selling snack brand on Amazon, followed by Clif Bar and Gerber Graduates. Frito-Lay and Nature Valley were tied as the fourth best-selling brands on the site.

CSP (2/8)

CHICAGO -- "Better for you" is big business. And if the top snack brands on Profitero's Top 100 Amazon Best Seller ranking are any indication, consumers are gobbling them up. Each of the snack and food brands on the list have serious health and wellness credibility. Plus, these packaged, grab-and-go items are typically found on c-store shelves. Click through to see these top snack brands from Amazon.com

<http://www.cspdailynews.com/category-news/snacks-candy/articles/top-5-best-selling-snack-brands-amazon#page=2>

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**\*\*13** From **RSA Management Group**

**EXCLUSIVE RSA TAYLOR CANDY DEAL**

Taylors Candy has an extensive variety of high quality products and packaging options including .99 peg bag candy, unpriced peg bag candy, laydown bags, candy filled tubs and pouches which encompass traditional candies like gummies, jellies, hard candies, chocolates, peanut brittle, variety of nuts and more.

TAYLOR CANDY

Deal Date: THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

4% per case Taylor Candy – All Products

**RSA Management Purchase Power Deals**

**Earn Extra Rebates on the following:**

NEW DEALS THIS WEEK

FERRERO (Tic Tac, Nutella, Ferrero Rocher and Raffaello) – RSA Exclusive

Deal Date: THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

10% per case Tic Tacs – All Products

10% per case Ferrero Rocher– All Products

10% per case Raffaello – All Products

10% per case Nutella – All Products

10% per case Nutella and Go– All Products

FERRERO – FEBRUARY OFF INVOICE PROMOTION

Deal Date: THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2017

Rebates Products

$30.00 per case Tic Tacs Singles–Freshmints, Orange, Fruit Adventure and Wintergreen

$30.00 per case Tic Tacs Mixers–Cherry Cola and Pina Colada

$9.45 per case Tic Tac Bottlepack – Fruit Adventure, Orange and Freshmint

$24.00 per case Ferrero Rocher 3 piece

STOUFFER’S AND LEAN CUISINE POWER BUY

Deal Date: MONDAY FEBRUARY 6, 11 AM EST THRU FEBRUARY 10-DELIVERED BETWEEN FEBRUARY 20-MARCH 3, 2017

Rebates Products

$5.00 per case Lean Cuisine Baked Chicken, Chicken Carbonara, Chicken Chow Mein, Grilled Chicken Primavera, Lasagna, NDFV Chicken Fried Rice, Steak Tips Portobello and Swedish Meatballs

$5.00 per case Stouffer’s Mac and Cheese, Meat Lasagna, Meatloaf and Pepperoni Pizza

Deals ending in February

PEPSI (Participating Bottlers Only)

Deal Date: THROUGH JANUARY 31 – DELIVERY BY FEBRUARY 7, 2017

Rebates Products

$1.50 per case 20 oz. Mountain Dew – ALL FLAVORS EXCEPT REGULAR AND DIET

$2.00 per case Lipton Teas – ALL FLAVORS – INCLUDING INNOVATION

$2.00 per case 15.2 oz. Ocean Spray – ALL FLAVORS

$2.00 per case 12 oz. Starbucks Refreshers – ALL FLAVORS

PEPSI INNOVATION PRODUCTS (Participating Bottlers Only)

Deal Date: THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2017

Rebates Products

$2.00 per case Kickstart 12 oz. Hydration Raspberry Citrus

$2.00 per case Kickstart 16 oz. Mango Lime

$2.00 per case Propel 20 oz. Watermelon Flavored Water

$2.00 per case Lipton 20 oz. Mango Tea

$2.00 per case Lipton Pure Leaf 18.5 oz. Pomegranate or Mint Flavor Tea

PEPSI – ORDER THROUGH AUTHORIZED PBC ONLY

Deal Date: THROUGH FEBRUARY, 2017 –DELIVERED BY MARCH 7, 2017

Rebates Products

$2.00 per case 20 oz. Wild Cherry and Diet Wild Cherry Pepsi - 24 count

$2.00 per case 18.5 oz Lipton Pure Leaf Tea 12 count– ALL FLAVORS

$2.00 per case 16 oz. AMP 12 count – ALL FLAVORS

AQUAFINA – ORDER THROUGH AUTHORIZED PBC ONLY

Deal Date: THROUGH FEBRUARY, 2017 –DELIVERED BY MARCH 7, 2017

Rebates Products

$1.00 per case 20 oz. Aquafina 24 count

STARBUCKS

Deal Date: THROUGH FEBRUARY, 2017 –DELIVERED BY MARCH 7, 2017

Rebates Products

$2.00 per case 13.7 oz. Starbucks Frappuccino – ALL FLAVORS

Deals ending in March

FRITO

Deal Date: THROUGH MARCH 5, 2017 - DELIVERY BY MARCH 18, 2017

Rebates Products

$1.92 per case Rold Gold and Rold Gold Thins – ALL FLAVORS

PEPSI (Participating Bottlers Only)

Deal Date: DELIVERY MARCH 31, 2017

Rebates Products

$3.00 per case 1L and 700mL Lifewtr 12 ct. – UPC 12000161155 and 12000161162

Deals ending in April

OTIS SPUNKMEYER

Deal Date: THROUGH APRIL 30, 2017

Rebates Products

$1.20 per case 4 oz. Wild Blueberry, Banana Nut and Chocolate Chip Muffin 24 ct.

Deals ending in June

OREO

Deal Date: DELIVERY JUNE 30, 2017

Rebates Products

$0.2 per unit Oreo Chocolate Bar

Deals ending in December

PLANTERS

Deal Date: DELIVERY BY DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

$2.88 per case 2 oz. Planters Peanuts

$1.44 per case Planters Trail Mix Nut and Chocolate

SPLENDA

Deal Date: THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

$3.30 per case Splenda 4/400 ct. Sweetener Packets

$3.00 per case Splenda 2000 ct. Bulk and 12/50 ct. Sweetener Packets

$2.60 per case Splenda 12/100 ct. Sweetener Packets

$1.25 per case Splenda 500 ct. Bulk Sweetener Packets

WELCH’S

Deal Date: DELIVERY BY DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rebates Products

$.01 per unit Welch’s, Gummi Factory, Sour Jacks, Sun-Maid, Fisher – ALL FLAVORS

Indefinite End Date

BEANITO’S

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.00 per case Bean Chips and Puffs - ALL FLAVORS

COLD STONE CREAMERY

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.50 per case All Flavors of Milk Shakers

DAISY’S BAKERY, INC

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

8% per case Individually Wrapped Muffin, Cake, Brownie, Pie, Cookie – ALL FLAVORS

JJ’s PIES

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.80 per case JJ’s Bakery Boxed Pies – ALL FLAVORS

J&J FOODS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

5% per case Kim & Scott’s IW Flavored Soft Pretzels and IW Pretzel Melts

5% per case Mary B’s IW Biscuit Breakfast Melts

5% per case Corazona’s HeartBar Oatmeal Squares

HINT WATER

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.00 per case Hint 100% Natural Goodness Water – ALL FLAVORS

J&J FOODS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

5% per case Kim & Scott’s IW Flavored Soft Pretzels and IW Pretzel Melts

5% per case Mary B’s IW Biscuit Breakfast Melts

5% per case Corazona’s HeartBar Oatmeal Squares

STEAZ TEA

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.50 per case ALL FLAVORS

STOK COLD-BREW COFFEE

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$3.00 per case 13.7 oz Stok Cold Brew Coffee – ALL FLAVORS

TITAN TEA

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.50 per case Titan Teas - ALL FLAVORS

VITA COCO – ORDER THROUGH AUTHORIZED DPSG ONLY

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$1.00 per case 11.1 oz. Vita Coco– ALL FLAVORS

$1.50 per case 17 oz. Vita Coco – ALL FLAVORS

WELCH’S FRUIT SNACKS

Deal Date: THROUGH INDEFINITE

Rebates Products

$2.88 per case Buddy Bears, Sour Jacks, Nuclear SQWorms, Sun Maid Chocolate covered Raisins and Fisher Chocolate covered Peanuts.

$1.44 per case Welch’s School Items – ALL FLAVORS

$0.96 per case Welch’s Fruit Snacks – ALL FLAVORS except school items

$0.96 per case Gummi Factory – ALL FLAVORS

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