**Week of January 14, 2022, President Riccobono's Notebook and National Items of Interest**

**President’s Notebook**

**National Federation of the Blind**

**Mark A. Riccobono**

[**officeofthepresident@nfb.org**](mailto:officeofthepresident@nfb.org)

**410-659-9314**

Dear Federation Family,

I am still fired up from our gatherings before and during the 2022 Washington Seminar week. You all continue to inspire me and fuel my love for the work of this movement.

We are heading into a busy spring convention season and planning for our first in-person convention in three years. There is much ahead to get excited about and to bring us together again.

# **Critical Actions:**

# **Museum Planning Survey Closing February 18:**

Your thoughts, suggestions, and opinions are needed to help us with the initial planning of a state-of-the-art museum dedicated to the civil rights struggle of blind Americans, including the history of the National Federation of the Blind as the leader in the blind civil rights movement. Our museum will highlight the struggles, triumphs, and challenges blind people have experienced and the contributions we have made as we continue to secure our place in the world as fully participating citizens. You can complete the survey online, or you can complete the telephone survey by calling 229-632-7878 or toll-free 833-632-7878. The survey will close on Friday, February 18, so please be sure to let us know your thoughts by then.

# **News:**

# **Protecting Our Treasury from Phishing Emails:**

Several of our affiliate and division leaders have received spam and phishing emails from what looks like other leaders within the organization. These emails have directed people to purchase gift cards or make sure Venmo, Zelle, or other electronic payment systems are set up to the bank account. These emails are not legitimate and should be deleted immediately.

# **Washington Seminar Thank You:**

# Thanks to everyone who participated in Washington Seminar. As a result of our advocacy our bills garnered many new cosponsors. The Access Technology Affordability Act in the House jumped from 118 to 130 cosponsors and in the Senate increased from 34 to 35. The Medical Device Nonvisual Accessibility Act jumped from 10 to 18 cosponsors. The Transformation to Competitive Integrated Employment Act, in the House, jumped from 24 to 34 cosponsors. In addition, the lead Senate cosponsor of the Transformation to Competitive Integrated Employment Act, Senator Steve Daines, spoke at our Great Gathering-In.

# **Template Letters Regarding Inaccessible Education Technology Software:**

# The NFB has posted to our website template letters for blind students, blind parents, and parents of blind children to use when they encounter inaccessible education technology software at their or their children’s schools. As the templates recommend, please copy NFB on any letters you send via the email address   [advocacy@nfb.org](mailto:advocacy@nfb.org)

* [Blind Parent Template Letter Regarding Inaccessible Education Technology](https://nfb.org/programs-services/legal-program/support-and-resources/blind-parent-template-letter-regarding)
* [Blind Student Template Letter Regarding Inaccessible Education Technology](https://nfb.org/programs-services/legal-program/support-and-resources/blind-student-template-letter-regarding)
* [Parent of Blind Student Template Letter Regarding Inaccessible Education Technology](https://nfb.org/programs-services/legal-program/support-and-resources/parent-blind-student-template-letter)

Please also continue to report information about accessible and inaccessible education tech software through NFB’s Education Technology Survey:   
<https://nfb.org/programs-services/legal-program/education-technology-survey>

# **Accessible Self-Service Kiosks at McDonald’s Restaurants:**

As a part of the NFB’s collaboration with McDonald’s to improve access for blind McDonald’s customers, the attached list includes the corporate-owned McDonald’s restaurants that now feature screen-reading software, tactile keypads, and the ability for customers to connect their headphones or ear buds to the kiosk and independently place their orders by responding to audio prompts. For more information about the NFB’s collaboration with McDonald’s, please visit https://nfb.org/about-us/press-room/mcdonalds-and-national-federation-blind-collaborate-self-service-kiosks. To watch the McDonald’s kiosk video shared during the NFB’s 2021 National Convention, please visit   
  
<https://nfb.org/get-involved/national-convention/past-conventions/2021-national-convention>

# **Dates to Keep in Mind: (all times eastern)**

* March 1: Presidential Release, 8:00 P.M.
* March 31: Deadline to submit scholarship application
* April 15: Deadline for the Dr. Jacob Bolotin Award nominations
* July 5-10: National Convention, New Orleans

The National Federation of the Blind knows that blindness is not the characteristic that defines you or your future. Every day we raise the expectations of blind people because low expectations create obstacles between blind people and our dreams. You can live the life you want; blindness is not what holds you back.