

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWS FROM: Ohio Network for the Chemically Injured

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**DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION
IT'S NOT A CHOICE
IT'S THE LAW**

Struggling to survive and be included in everyday life, the disabled and their supporting agencies have been forced to “put up the good fight” when ordinary measures fail to provide disability accommodations as required under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other disability law. Cooperation, courtesy, and caring are the keys to successful disability accommodation that could reduce stress, suffering, and the necessity to litigate.

Title III of the ADA covers public accommodations, a section of the law not as well-known as Title I, which covers employment discrimination. Places of public accommodation prohibited from discriminating include hospitals, doctors’ offices, theaters, restaurants, libraries, parks, shopping centers and hotels. Title II prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all services, programs, and activities provided to the public by state and local governments.

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) is one of the disabilities routinely denied disability accommodations due to ignorance of the law, blatant bias, and the inability of people to accept or perceive the seriousness of the condition because they are untrained in toxicology, insufficiently concerned about indoor air quality, or ignore the warnings on product labels.

In today’s busy world people tend to overlook issues they haven’t personally experienced, such as disability from toxic exposures, and therefore are unprepared to deal with health problems that suddenly appear. Many people then take prescription drugs, which may cause further harm.

May has been designated “MCS Awareness Month,” globally and locally. A Cuyahoga County Council (CCC) Resolution (No. R2012-0011) encourages mayors and school superintendents to create

their own resolutions to accommodate those with MCS. Finding ways to make cities and schools more environmentally safe will go a long way towards accommodating and avoiding MCS, as well as protecting others, including children whose immune systems are not fully developed until they reach their mid-teens.

During May, related books and information will be on display at many libraries statewide including Cuyahoga County Public Libraries and Cleveland Public Library, Science and Technology Department, Downtown Cleveland.

Toni Temple, President of the Ohio Network for the Chemically Injured, a 501(c) 3 that supports and advocates on behalf of those with MCS, states, “We hope that you will improve the environment of your own little corner of the world, which includes your school, city, workplace, and neighborhood. Using least- toxic products (and eliminating others, such as fragrance- emission devices and pesticides) will create a healthier environment for all of us, and may assist in avoiding other illnesses such as cancer, asthma, Parkinson’s, diabetes, and autism. Many illnesses are caused by toxins; our genetics influence what we will get.”

A wise caregiver summed it up: “Don’t punish her for her disability.” Those with MCS are trying to survive under the worst of conditions, without much support. Everyone can throw a pebble into the stream of kindness to set an example, create hope, and call for further research about MCS.

For further information about MCS and the Ohio Network for the Chemically Injured visit www.ohionetwork.org where you can download a copy of: “Accommodating MCS is Easier Than You Think”. Let us know what you plan to do in your community, so that we can share the ideas with others. Write P.O. Box 29290, Parma, OH 44129 or phone 440-845-1888.

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