



**UNDERSTANDING STATE
ADVOCACY:
FOLLOW THE
MONEY**

Brought to you by Elizabeth a
Roxane Romanick

Elizabeth Romanick



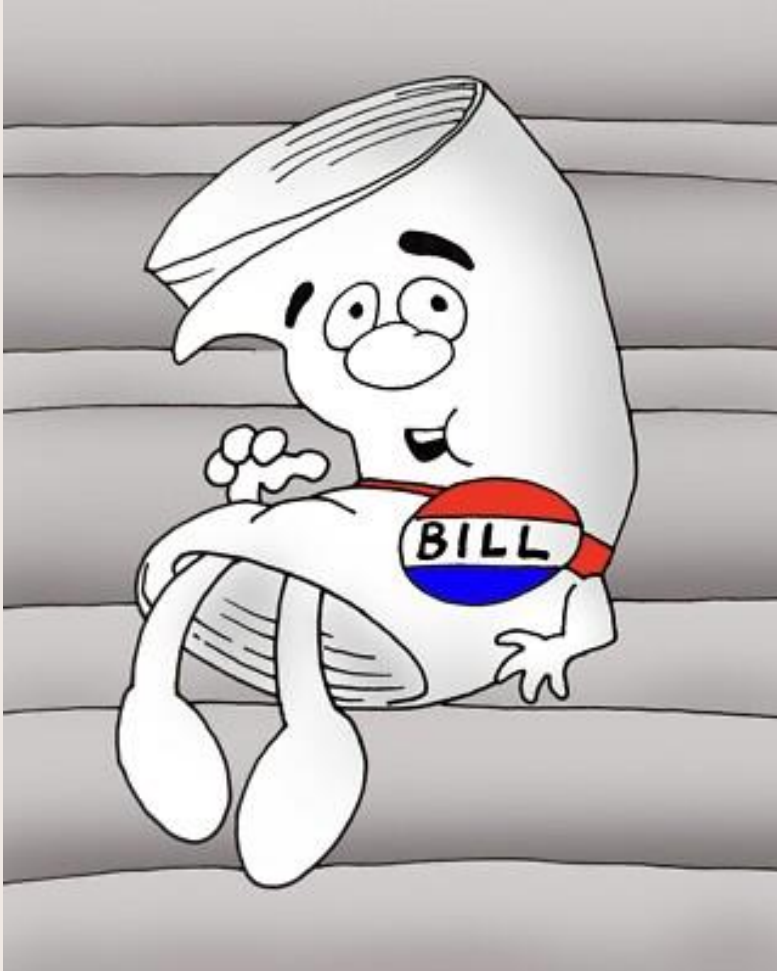
Elizabeth Romanick's message to the world is simple and powerful: inclusion matters. From birth, Elizabeth has lived with a Down syndrome diagnosis while being fully included in everyday experiences, including attending college and earning an associate's degree in early childhood special education. Today, she brings her lived experience to her role as a project specialist with the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities at Minot State University, where she is proud to share that she now has her own office.

Roxane Romanick



Roxane Romanick is a social worker with more than 25 years of experience supporting children and families in the areas of developmental disabilities and special education. She is also the mother of Elizabeth, who has Down syndrome, a role that has deeply shaped her personal and professional work. Roxane spent 15 years in North Dakota's Birth to Three Early Intervention system as a parent mentor and consultant and served in multiple roles on the State Interagency Coordinating Council. She is the former Executive Director of Designer Genes of North Dakota, a nonprofit supporting individuals with Down syndrome and their families. Roxane holds a master's degree in social work from the University of North Dakota and has extensive experience in advocacy, policy development, and family support at the local, state, and federal levels.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS - PUBLIC FUNDING



- The majority of individuals with Down syndrome and their families rely on public programs.
- Most public policy needs public funding to stand it up.
 - Direct service
 - Technical assistance
 - Personnel to administer the funding
- Knowing how a support is funded makes it easier to identify and implement change.

A STORY



- North Dakota needed money to continue their Inclusive Post-Secondary Education efforts as federal grant was coming to an end
- We figured out which of our state legislators made decisions about higher education funding.
- I met with them during Disability Awareness Day and found out that we had fans on the Senate Appropriations committee where the higher education budget was being considered.

A STORY- Continued



- Once they included the funding, those fans helped to make sure the House would keep the money in the bill.
- We did not have a policy bill, so we had to follow the money in the Higher Education budget and that was hard. There's a lot of people who want money.
- We ended up getting 500 hundred thousand dollars!

North Dakota State Capital Liz Romanick Testimony

A large, solid orange oval button is centered on the page. Inside the oval, the text "Video of Testimony" is written in a light blue font. The words "Video of" and "Testimony" are each underlined with a thin blue line.

[Video of
Testimony](#)



FISCAL NOTES

- Lesson learned that sometimes going after funding will drive policy - in this case a footprint for IPSE state funding in ND.
- If we had started with a policy bill saying ND should have a strong IPSE network, we would have had to click on the “fiscal note.”
- Usually prepared by Congress or your legislature generally without your input.
- Can definitely affect the outcome of the legislation.

MAKE IT YOUR BUSINESS



Be CURIOUS how a service is paid for:

Is it private insurance?

Is it Medicaid?

Is it a federal grant?

Is it state general funds?

Is it local funds paid by a sales tax or a mill levy?

Whether you're a parent or a professional

FOLLOWING THE MONEY... AN EXAMPLE

- Job is with North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities
- Considered North Dakota's University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)
- Funded by federal \$'s
- Not included in President's '27 Budget. Congress decides



Break it Down...

- Authority
- Funding Approval
- Management
- Formal Advisory
- Vehicles of Change



Support: Special Education

Level	Authority	Funding Approval	Management	Advisory	Vehicles of Change
Federal	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (statute and regulations)	Congress	 Department of Education (Linda McMahon)  Office of Special Education and Rehab Services (Kelly Rogers)  Office of Special Education Program (Erin McHugh)	Public Hearings Public Comment Congressional testimony	- Families and Family Based Organizations, like Family Voices, The Arc, Federation - Council on Exceptional Children - National Association of State Directors - National PTI Directors - State School Administrators - National School Board Association - Diagnosis special org.
State	ND Century Code State Administrative Code Policies, procedures, guidelines	ND Legislature	Department of Public Instruction (Levi Bachmeier)  ND State Designed Special (Mary O'Connor)  Specially Services - Education McCarvel-	Legislative testimony IDEA State Advisory Panel	- Families and Family Based Organizations, like Family Voices, The Arc, Federation - ND Protection and Advocacy - State School Admin. - NDEA - State School Board Assoc.
Local	Policies, procedures, guidelines	Local School Board	School Superintendents Unit Special Education Directors	School board public comment FEET groups Special Education Boards	- Families - Local Arc - Diagnosis special org.

Here's to Following the Money...



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