



For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
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Personnel Announcement

President George W. Bush today announced the appointment of **Charles Joseph Weis** of Indiana to "**The President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities**" (PCPID), formerly The President's Committee on Mental Retardation (PCMR). PCPID is a federal advisory committee, established by Presidential Executive Order to advise the President of the United States and the Secretary of The Department of Health and Human Services on issues concerning citizens with intellectual disabilities, coordinate activities between different federal agencies and assess the impact of their policies upon the lives of citizens with intellectual disabilities and their families.

It is estimated that between 7 and 8 million Americans of all ages, or three percent of the general population, experience intellectual disabilities. Nearly 30 million, or one in ten families in the United States, are directly affected by a person with intellectual disabilities at some point in their lifetime. Intellectual disabilities present a major challenge to the social, educational, health, and economic systems within the United States.

The President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities was first established in 1966 by Executive Order to focus on this critical subject of national concern. Since 1966, the Committee has fostered State planning, stimulated development of strategies, policies and programs and advanced the concept of community participation in the field of intellectual disabilities. To continue to best fulfill its purpose, the President has adopted several national goals in order to better recognize and uphold the right of all people with intellectual disabilities to enjoy a quality of life that promotes independence, self-determination, and participation as productive members of society. These goals include the assurance of full citizenship rights of people with intellectual disabilities, the provision of all necessary supports to individuals and families, the reduction of the occurrence and severity of intellectual disabilities and the promotion of the widest dissemination of information of models, programs, and services within the field of intellectual disabilities.

Weis and his wife, Maura, are the parents of Charlie Jr., a freshman in high school, and Hannah, who lives with global developmental delays. In 2003, Charlie and Maura established the Hannah & Friends Foundation, dedicated to children affected by developmental disorders. The foundation funds Hannah's Helping Hands, which provides quality of life grants to families in Indiana and Rhode Island that care for children and adults with special needs. The Weis family, through Hannah and Friends, also has purchased 30 acres of land in the South Bend area and is in the process of building a farm and residential center for special needs adults age 18 and older.

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