**For Immediate Release**

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**Alliance Center for Independence and REV UP NJ Will Host a Disability Voting Event in Trenton on September 19th**

On September 19th, dozens of disability advocates and voting rights experts will be attending *The Power of the Disability Vote*, an event held at the NJ State House Annex on 131 West State Street in Trenton. Time is set for 12:00 noon to 3:00 PM. This event is open to the public.

The purpose of the day is to underscore the importance of the disability vote in this year’s gubernatorial election. “With nearly 12% of the state’s population identifying themselves as having a disability, we need to show the candidates that our issues need to be addressed,” says Carole Tonks, Executive Director of the Alliance Center for Independence.

The event will feature noteworthy speakers on the voter rights of people with disabilities, including advocates with disabilities. Scheduled speakers include: Assemblywoman Carol Murphy, Burlington County, Peri Nearon, Executive Director, Division of Disabilities Services, Disability Rights Advocates Nybil Ghanem, Barbara Coppens, and Ryan Delgado; Colleen Roche, Advocate and ACI Board President; Frank Latham, and Kevin Nunez, representing the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities; and Christopher Miller, representing Disability Rights NJ.

Lilian Aluri, REV UP Voting Campaign Coordinator, American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) in Washington, D.C. will also speak.

Douglas L. Kruse, PhD, Associate Director, Institute for the Study of Employee Ownership and Profit Sharing at Rutgers University’s School of Management and Labor, will also present on his latest study that focuses on the possible upsurge of people with disabilities voting in the 2020 election.

The event will also consist of giveaways, music, an ice cream truck, and food trucks. There will be resource tables, staffed by representatives from disability and voting rights organizations who will conduct voter registration. An ACI-sponsored photo exhibit, depicting 50 years of independent living and disability rights in NJ, will be on display in Goldfinch Square inside the State House Annex from September 19th through September 23rd. “The photo exhibit is an opportunity to educate legislators and the general public on the vital and unique role NJ Centers for Independent Living play in promoting independence among people with disabilities in the Garden State,” according to Luke Koppisch, Deputy Director of the Alliance Center for Independence.

In recognition of those with disabilities who died as a result of COVID-19, the NJ Disability Action Committee (DAC) will conduct a COVID Memorial following the REV UP event at 3:00 PM.

*The Alliance Center for Independence (ACI) is a 501(c)(3) community-based, grassroots organization that supports and promotes independent living for people with disabilities in Middlesex, Somerset, and Union counties. REV UP New Jersey is a chapter of the national REV UP, an effort to increase the participation of people with disabilities.*

*ACI and REV UP are strictly non-partisan organizations and do not endorse or support any candidate for political office. This event is funded by the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD).*