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OPERATOR: The conference is now started this conference is now being recorded.

Hello and welcome to the RespectAbility webinar campaign 2014 results of the new bipartisan poll of voters with and without disabilities and disability issues. Your moderator for today's program is Jennifer Mizrahi president of Respec Ability. Your speakers for today's program are Dr. Whit Ayres, a Republican and Dr. Stan Greenberg, a Democrat. Audio cast quality subject to equipment available bandwidth and Internet traffic if you experience unsatisfactory audio quality please use telephone dial in option provided in your confirmation and reminder emails if you have dialed in, operator assistance is available by pressing 0 pound if you have questions at any time using the chat window located to the lower left corner of the presentation screen a question and answer session will follow the presentation. I'll turn over to our moderator, Jennifer, please again.

JENNIFER MIZRAHI: Thank you all for joining us today. We're delighted to have you with us for campaign 2014 and we're particularly delighted to have such extraordinary speakers. Republican Whit Ayres is a leading DC political consultant with over 30 years of experience in polling and survey research for high profile political campaigns and associations. His firm is the North Star Opinion Research, it's a national opinion public opinion and public affairs firm here locally in the Washington area. He has many important clients including Senators Marco Rubio, Lamar Alexander, Lindsey Graham, Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam and others. He's very active in the American Association of Political consultants where he plays a very important leadership role we also have Stan Greenberg who is a Democratic political consultant perhaps the leading one in the world. He has served as polling advisor to Presidents and Prime Ministers,

CEOs and dozens of tough campaigns in the United States and around the world including for President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore, President Nelson Mandela as well as the national leaders in Israel, Europe and Latin America. His corporate clients include many of the big name companies that you have heard of. He also does bipartisan polls for NPR's LA Times and the bipartisan policy center. I also want to thank Dave Walker who has played a key role in this work. This is a bipartisan poll. And RespectAbility is a nonprofit non-partisan organization. We have very interesting data to go through and we will have a chance for Q&A so let's start with Whit Ayres.

WHIT AYRES: Thank you Jennifer, thank you all for joining us. This is another in a series of webinars North Star Opinion Research has done with Greenberg Quinlan Rosner. This is another series that we have done together and you will see here what we have found before and that is that voters with disabilities and even more importantly family members with disabilities and close friends of people with disabilities constitute a very significant chunk of the electorate. And when you talk about issues affecting people with disabilities, you really get their attention. Speaking of someone who is in a family where a family member has a serious disability, I will tell you that when people talk about issues that they are facing, it gets not only their attention but the attention of all of their friends and all of their family members. So I hope you'll enjoy some of the data that we have here from the people who actually voted in the 2014 election. Stan I'll let you talk and then we'll turn it over to Dave.

STAN GREENBERG: Thank you. This is Stan Greenberg thank you to RespectAbility for being so aggressive in putting this issue before the country. And the voters. And this assessment of what happened in the election related to disabilities.

There's no doubt about the seriousness of this community and the potential for those who are making public policy. And those who are trying to be politically attentive with communities matters and as reflected in this data. And they were very attentive in this election where these issues were raised that they clearly wanted to hear much more on these issues. The potential is very real and you'll see the spikes that appear in the survey that are a signal to elected officials that acknowledging these issues and moving ahead with policy can be politically effective and hopefully this survey will become part

of that discussion so let me turn it over to Dave Walker who has supervised this work from the side of Greenberg Quinlan Rosner.

DAVE WALKER: Hello everyone, again this is David Walker. I work with Stan Greenberg at Greenberg Quinlan Rosner. It was our pleasure to work with North Star in producing this work. I'm going to go through the slides. I've been accused often of mumbling in presentations if that's a problem I'm sure Jennifer or someone will give me a signal to say stop mumbling like Whit. I have a family member, a son with a significant disability so this is for us it's more than politics. It's something we live with every day. And it's a great pleasure to work for this organization.

So I'm going to move through these slides just briefly I'm going to tell you this is part of a national post-election survey. We interviewed 2014 voters which are the same people who did participate in the recent election. There are a total of 1030E interviews. This dataset and the 1030 interviews the margin of error is around 3 points give or take. The survey was weighted to exit surveys, as well. It might be weighted again once the exits are -- there's a continuous process so we are weighting and reweighting but it's fairly close to what actually happened.

The first survey and this is something Whit alluded to earlier, the disability community or the people we define as disability community is very, very big. That's a polling term. But 4 in 10 voters say they are personally affected saying they describe themselves as having a disability, they have a family member who has a disability at 23% or a close friend who has a disability, as well. When you think about that number, nearly 40%, it's higher than say white non-college voters or white seniors or even seniors overall, higher than Hispanic voters or African-American voters. It's -- and a lot of the -- I mean all of the groups that are talked about in post-election analysis, this group is bigger. Can have a bigger impact. And it's actually rare that anyone will look and see how they voted.

The other thing about this community is particularly among people who describe themselves as personally disabled, they are more attentive. They -- this was not a huge turnout election. A lot of states turn out when -- the turnout was significantly lower even compared to 2010. Just one example in Pennsylvania they have had 600,000 fewer

voters than four years ago. Minnesota set a record for low turnout, as well.

This is an electorate that was a little bit counter cyclical particularly when you look at people who described themselves as having a disability. You know it's conjecture. But these are people who have at least in their own minds they have a significant stake in decisions that are made in state capitals and national capitals so this matters to them in a very profound way. Maybe even a little bit more than is the case with other groups.

The people with disabilities and the disability community as a whole also share the frustration of the rest of the country with the direction of things. They are in no way atypical and in fact if you look at people with a personal disability they are even more cynical about the direction of things.

We asked everyone in the survey and we asked people in the disability community, as well, do you approve or disapprove of the President. The President's numbers overall he's under water by about 12 points. If you look at people with personal disability, the President does a little bit better. In part that reflects a partisan bias. People who are struggling with a person with a disability are more Democratic than average. I think that probably reflects that. But if you looked at the overall disability community, again, this includes people who describe themselves as having a disability have a family member with a disability or friends or close friends with a disability they look pretty much like the rest of the country when it comes to the President.

So how did they vote? If you look at the Senate races and this is -- I'll show you this slide next we also have a time series slide if you look at the Senate race, it's a fairly divided community. It's arguably swing. Again there's significant Democratic margin among people with a personal disability not shared. In fact Republicans did quite well among friends and family members. So the overall result at least in the Senate race where Republicans won nationally at least in the survey this is just among battleground just so you know it's all of the contested races. Nationally they won by 3 points in the battleground. And in the disability community they won by 6 points. So when you net everything out, it doesn't look that much different than rest of the country.

You see the same pattern in the House, House races. This is national data. People with a personal disability- Democrats won that vote by 12 points but the overall disability community the Republicans won and did significantly better in House races than they did overall. So there is very big swing element here.

Last September, we fielded a survey of -- in the Senate battleground and showed results. And this slide is a time series, but that's data. As you'll see compared to September and this was just the battleground, just to remind everyone the battleground it was a battleground that favored the Republicans this year. A lot of Omni states. That was reflected in the survey in September that was reflected in the outcome in November and it's certainly reflected in the survey. There was a small Republican surge among just in the overall disability community. Again this includes everyone. From people -- friends, family and self.

The other thing that was interesting is their agenda. If you look at voters overall, this was very much an economy election. By 24 points overall. Voters were saying the economy was the most important issue that they used to decide whom to support. And if you look specifically at the disability community, the same pattern, in fact it's even higher. Not quite beyond margin of error but very close. In other research we have done it should come to the surprise of no one the disability community as a whole and particularly individuals with disabilities are struggling economically for a variety of reasons. Some obvious, some less so.

So the economy is even more critical to this group than voters overall. And again this election really turned on the economy. And this next slide we asked people overall, we asked everyone in a survey whether the President and the political debate in this country were raising issues of importance, that were important to them and whether they are just not dealing with issues that matter to people. The country overall did not believe their issues were addressed by nearly 2 to 1 margin. That sentiment is reflected almost within a point among the disability community. And then we were more specific. And we asked people -- and I'm going to read this question because it's important we all hear it. We asked people thinking about issues in the contested campaigns in your state would you say that the candidates put forward specific serious policies to improve opportunities for people with disabilities or did candidates not put forward any serious

policies on those issues?

Overall nationally voters did not hear much on these issues. 22%. I think that's pretty fair. Having watched these races it was relatively rare to hear anyone give voice to people with disabilities. There was some dialogue around Veterans and some of the issues that Veterans are going through and the VA and so forth. I suspect that 22% is reflective of that debate. But the one thing I want to highlight is the number -- let's see if it will -- yes, the forward here, this is -- these are again people who are self described as having a disability. They certainly have a much bigger ear by huge numbers, 16 points for these issues and for candidates raising these issues than voters overall.

The other issue, too, and this is something we saw again in September, the issue of helping people with disabilities and particularly with jobs and allowing them to work has enormous power and I would argue that there was missed opportunity by both sides not to give more voice to this issue than was in fact what happened.

What you have in this slide are two measures. One we asked everyone -- we asked people who had heard some candidates speak to this issue what kind of impact it had. And 78% said it had an impact. And 36% said it had a major impact. Again if you look at persons with disabilities, huge impact, 76% were saying it had a major impact in how they voted. And then we also asked them whether it had any impact or not if it was -- made them more likely to support or less likely to support. And it's clearly one sided. 83% overall if you look at the people with disabilities it's 92 to 7 the disability community as a whole also had a disproportionate impact at 82% overall. 43% major impact. And it certainly had influence in how they voted.

This is a question we asked anyone. And we just asked them simply is this something you're interested in. Would you have wanted to hear more about -- hear more from the candidates who have policies to expand opportunities for people with disabilities. 2 to 1. It's very one sided. 65%, 35% overall not surprisingly higher among people who are struggling with disability. And this is the last slide. We asked people in thinking about the election do you think voting was fully accessible to people with disabilities were people with disabilities able to vote due to inaccessibility again it's not an issue that most people follow. I will note again that people who are struggling with personal

disability are more likely to see a problem with the franchise and with access to the franchise 6 points is not a huge change. But it is a notable change. So that's the end of the deck. And I think we will open it up to questions.

Stan and Whit what do you think are the most important findings from this deck?

From me when I look at it is that first I pay attention to the fact that those with personal disabilities are more likely to vote for candidates which I think the -- they are voting Democratic but I think it's probably because of recognition of needs related to disability so that there is a -- there appears to be some translation in the vote which I think is an important concept to establish in the research. But bottom line, the most important was that the -- I think attentiveness. I was surprised by the percentage of people who said they heard people addressing that issue. And when they did hear it, it had an enormous impact on their vote.

So we have individual level some translation of it into voting. Very attentive ear to leaders, candidates beginning to speak to it. Evidence that that translates into real impact. And then this very large number who say that they would have been interested on hearing more from candidates. And that's two-thirds number, 2 to 1. Those are powerful messages to take home.

WHIT AYRES: I agree with what Stan said completely. We all know that the political messages that penetrate most effectively are those that affect us personally and directly. And you see that very clearly in Slide 14. Where people who are affected by disabilities or whose family members are affected by disabilities hear any message that directly affects them. And the person with the disability. So the two take-aways to me from this deck are, first of all, the size of the disability community. You're talking 4 out of 10 voters here overall when you define it as family members and friends as well as people who are disabled. Coupled with the fact that messages that relate to a disability really penetrate to these people.

JENNIFER MIZRAHI: Why do you think it is that the campaign did so little to use any disability issues in their communication strategies? And what do you think it will take

between now and 2016 to ensure that those issues are considered and put forth in future campaigns?

WHIT AYRES: Part of it I think is lack of awareness of both the size of the disability community and its potential political impact. Part of it -- part of it I think is probably a sense that the issues for people with disabilities are specific to their particular disability. So that people with vision problems have different issues than people who have hearing problems and people who have mobility problems. But there are still ways to cut across those various disabilities, I think. And I think it's a matter of politicians, first of all, being aware of it and second, figuring out how to message to the entire disability community.

JENNIFER MIZRAHI: Thank you. Stan, what do you feel are the key things to give candidates to start to focus more on this given what you both talked about in terms of the large size of the population and the deep interests that they have in these issues?

STAN GREENBERG: I would start very early with the educating all of the campaigns that are starting up for 2016. Whether that's Presidential level, and I think it is a Presidential level. And we'll probably get more traction as they begin to recognize the community, the issue. And I think it's an opportunity -- it's bipartisan is non-ideological but there's no doubt that there's people with attendance. So I think you start soon with education of all of those who are beginning to think about running for President.

JENNIFER MIZRAHI: Operator do we have questions from the phone lines or are there questions that are online that are showing?

OPERATOR: Showing no questions but if you have dialed in if you do have a question press 7 and the pound sign on your phone.

JENNIFER MIZRAHI: Operator if you can repeat one more time how people can ask the question.

OPERATOR: To ask a verbal question press 7 pound on your telephone now to queue

up for verbal questions or submit your questions via the chat window.

JENNIFER MIZRAHI: I think our speakers are so very clear in the data that it sounds like there aren't questions. I just want to say how much I appreciate the opportunity to work with some of America's top pollsters on this issue. This gives RespectAbility an incredibly important topic because if we do want to empower Americans with disabilities to achieve the American Dream, obviously we need to get political leaders to really deliver. There has been some wonderful changes in policies that we have seen through passage of the new bill on these issues. And now it's going to the states. And every Governor that was just elected will by law be required to have a new quote-unquote unified plan for how to deal with these employment issues for people with disabilities while at the same time meeting the needs of employers for qualified talent that can really move our economy forward.

So I think this is a win-win issue for employers, for taxpayers who would like to see a smaller burden of the disabilities benefits system. And most of all for people with disabilities who as we saw in this poll do have the economy and jobs as their No. 1 top issue, even more so than voters overall. This issue is really real for us all. I want to thank Dave Walker. I want to thank Whit Ayres and I want to thank Stan Greenberg we really appreciate your solid work on this.

DAVE WALKER: You folks have a good day.

JENNIFER MIZRAHI: Thank you.

OPERATOR: This concludes today's Respect Ability webinar. Thank you, all, for attending.