

1841 Chelton Lane
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709
February 12, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

I support House Bill 336, a bill that adds Supported Decision Making (SDM) agreements as an option to guardianship in Alaska. SDM agreements are planned and written by a set process, with supporters that are chosen by the person who wants support. These valid agreements will have specific ways that supporters will help with decisions and will have safeguards to protect the well-being and independence of adults with disabilities.

SDM agreements are planned and written by a set process, using supporters that are chosen by the person who wants support. These valid agreements will have specific ways that supporters will help with decisions and will have safeguards to protect the well-being and independence of adults with disabilities. There will be a basic template form for the SDM agreements, but each agreement will be individualized to convey the directions of the person who wants support, and the ways they want to be supported

I have full guardian and conservatorship for my 24 year old son who experiences both a developmental and a mental health disability. Although I have the authority to make decisions for him, he and I have always discussed decisions and come to an agreement before a decision is made. This process has always worked well for us as well as several other guardians I know. SDM would be a great option for my son. It would empower him and give him more control of his life. Our public guardians, working under the Office of Public Advocacy, are overwhelmed because each public guardian has over 100 wards for whom they make decisions. Inserting SDM agreements as a third option in Alaska Guardianships would take some of that burden from Public Guardians.

The passage of HB336 will allow a person the opportunity to have a voice in how they live their lives. Research shows that people who make more decisions about their lives are more involved in the community, more likely to have supported employment, and more likely to report satisfaction with their lives. Control of your life brings about empowerment, self-determination, and a positive mindset. I encourage legislators to work to move HB336 through the legislative process as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



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