



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR SEAN PARNELL

Department of Health & Social Services

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES
& SPECIAL EDUCATION
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February 13, 2013

Senator Johnny Ellis
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Building, Room 7
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: SB 36 Relating to missing vulnerable adult prompt response and notification plans

Dear Senator Ellis,

Thank you for sponsoring SB 36, which would develop and implement a missing vulnerable adult prompt response and notification plan.

As you know, the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education (the Council) advocates for change that improves the lives of individuals with disabilities. One of the roles of the Council is to serve as Alaska's State Council on Developmental Disabilities to ensure individuals with developmental disabilities receive the supports and services they need.

The Council supports SB 36, which will improve the lives of vulnerable adults by increasing their safety. The Council estimates approximately 12,000 Alaskans experience developmental disabilities. We believe that the establishment of this immediate response plan with a local search component will be extremely effective in locating any potential missing vulnerable adults and returning them to safety in a timely manner.

Senate Bill 36 would call on the Department of Public Safety and the Department of the Military and Veterans Affairs to develop plans for the creation and publicizing a missing vulnerable adult alert. The Council believes that having a response system to locate and protect vulnerable adults in the instance they are lost is a necessity in the state of Alaska, where environmental dangers such as the weather pose very real threats to the safety of these individuals. Without presenting additional costs to the state, SB 36 would provide much needed security and peace of mind to adults with disabilities and their loved ones.

The Council commends this effort to have Alaska join the 38 states that have implemented plans to protect citizens with disabilities. The Council joins the other concerned citizens and agencies in support of this effort to make the safety of Alaska's adults with disabilities and senior citizens a priority.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Gebhart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and "G".

Eric Gebhart
Council Chair

Creating Change That Improves the Lives of People with Disabilities