



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Health and Social Services

Governor's Council on Disabilities
& Special Education

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March 25, 2019

Representative Geran Tarr
Alaska State Capitol, Room 128
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Representative Tarr:

The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education (the "Council") fills a variety of federal and state roles, including serving as the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act. As the state DD Council, the Council works with Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS) and other state agencies to ensure that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families receive the services and supports that they need, as well as participate in the planning and design of those services.

We partner with other boards and commissions all the time, and have been very supportive of the great work that Suicide Prevention Council has done to bring awareness, support and hope to Alaskans on this very difficult issue. Therefore, the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education wishes to offer support for HB 22, to extend the "Statewide Suicide Prevention Council" to June 30, 2027. As you are aware, Alaska has a very high suicide rate and it affects all segments of our population, including those who experience intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and their families. The Council stands ready to assist in the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council to increase outreach and awareness to our beneficiaries. The Council itself lost one of its valued employees to suicide four years ago and our entire staff and members mourn her loss deeply.

Thank you for taking the lead to extend the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council for ten more years.

Sincerely,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MAGGIE WINSTON".

Maggie Winston, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Reinhart".

Patrick Reinhart, Executive Director