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Equipping Alaskans who are blind and visually impaired with skills for success in life and work

January 26, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to express strong support for SB 83, changing the name of the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities to the State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee. Since this committee provides oversight of Vocational Rehabilitation, the name will clearly align it with the State of Alaska, Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The name change will also reduce the ongoing confusion between this committee and the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education.

This legislation will bring state statute into compliance with federal law. It will eliminate the need to change statutes every time federal law changes. This committee will also function as the assistive technology advisory council as required under federal law.

Thank you for considering SB 83. It is important that this committee is compliant with federal law to ensure continued funding which is critical to assisting Alaskans with visual and other disabilities to be employed and have access to assistive technology services. Please contact me if I can be of any assistance or provide additional information.

Sincerely,

Karla Jutzi

Karla Jutzi
Executive Director



January 26, 2009

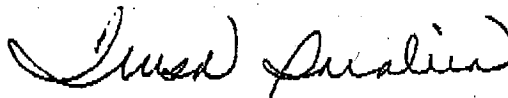
To Whom It May Concern:

The Alaska Statewide Independent Living Council strongly supports SB 83. This legislation will bring state statute into compliance with federal law. It will also eliminate the need to change state statute every time federal law changes. This committee will also function as the assistive technology advisory council as required under federal law.

We support the name change of the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities to the State Vocational Rehabilitation Committee. Since this committee provides oversight to the Vocational Rehabilitation program, the name will clearly align it with the State of Alaska, Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division Vocational Rehabilitation. The name change will also reduce the on-going confusion between this committee and the Governor's Council on Disability and Special Education.

Thank you for considering SB 83. It is important that this committee is compliant with federal law to ensure continued funding which is critical to assist Alaskans with disabilities to become employed and have access to appropriate assistive technology services and devices. Please contact us if we can be of any assistance or provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



Teresa Sarabia

Vice Chair

Alaska Statewide Independent Living Council