

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES
AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

Legislative Committee Meeting

LOCATION

Governor's Council Conference Room
3601 C Street
Anchorage, Alaska
Teleconference

Meeting Date
March 8, 2012
1:00 p.m.

Attendees:

Anthony Cravalho
David Flynn, Chair
Art Delaune
Eric Gebhart
Margaret Kossler
Banarsi Lal
Steve Lesko

Staff:

Teresa Holt
Jasmine Woodland

Prepared by:
Jeannette Rice, Peninsula Reporting

Call to Order – 1:00 p.m.
Roll Call

READING OF THE COUNCIL MISSION

David Flynn recited the Council’s mission statement: Creating change that improves the lives of people with disabilities.

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Announcements or Good News

Teresa Holt announced that as of today, there are 16 cross-sponsors for Senate Bill 74 for autism insurance.

David Flynn announced that he and his wife had a nice week in Hawaii, their first vacation together in seven years.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Banarsi Lal **MOVED** to approve the agenda. The motion **PASSED**.

APPROVAL OF PAST MINUTES

Steve Lesko **MOVED** to approve the minutes from the January 12th, 2012, and February 9th, 2012 meetings. The motion **PASSED**.

CORRESPONDENCE

Teresa Holt reported that Millie Ryan received an e-mail asking if the Council was going to take the lead in Alaska in following up on Rosa’s Law, which is a federal mandate to replace the words “mental retardation” in all laws and regulations with the words “intellectual disability”. Teresa suggested that the Legislative Committee might want to make that one of next year’s legislative priorities.

Teresa Holt stated that they sent out the first and second legislative updates to the Council’s listserv on February 20th and March 5th, and if anyone needs to be added to the list, send Teresa an e-mail and she will

send a link.

Teresa Holt stated that the Council wrote a letter of support for Senate Bill 151, which adds FASD as a mitigating factor in sentencing in criminal cases.

Voting Activities

Teresa asked committee members to make sure they are registered to vote, and to look at the polling places while they are there to make sure they are accessible, and let Teresa or Millie know if not.

Teresa reported on a few other voting-related items that were not on the agenda:

- The Get Out the Vote coalition met and talked about House Bill 260 and 287, which make it easier for people to establish absentee voting status. HB 260 asked for permanent absentee status, but wasn't gaining traction, so HB 287 was introduced, which establishes absentee voting status for two years. Teresa noted that the coalition opposes HB 162, which would require a photo ID to be presented at the polling places, because many people with developmental disabilities don't have photo IDs.
- The Council is working with AADD to ensure that the people they serve and their staff are registered to vote, and to help find or create some kind of guidance in assisting voters who experience a disability in making choices on how to vote.
- The Disability Law Center is going to have a voter registration booth at Full Lives, and is hoping to establish a hotline about accessible polling places.
- The Center for Human Development does an I Vote I Count campaign to get the word out about voting.

Art Delaune reported that Wall Busters is planning a voter registration barbecue on May 10th, and they are also working with Division of Elections to get a touch-screen voting machine at Access Alaska and to have a

couple of staff trained to help people learn how to vote. Wall Busters also plans to have part of each meeting during the summer dedicated to talking about the elections, the new districting, and any propositions that come out, and to invite legislators to attend their meetings from May until election time so people can meet them.

UPDATE FROM KEY CAMPAIGN

Jasmine Woodland described her experience at Key Campaign, which was especially crowded this year with the 25th anniversary celebration. Jasmine noted that Key Campaign received a legislative citation, sponsored by Senator Bettye Davis, to honor the work that Key has done in advocacy over the past 25 years.

Steve Lesko added that this was one of the best Key Campaigns ever, with a number of legislators actually joining in singing the songs at the rally on the Capitol steps, and the Lieutenant Governor stayed for the entire Unity Dinner. Steve added that Kathy and Millie promptly responded to legislators' concerns and requests for information, and now it's just a matter of following through. Steve Lesko thanked the Council for its support and the scholarships provided for Key members and their families to go to Juneau.

Jasmine Woodland stated that she noticed some practices at Key that the Council could use to streamline its January Juneau meeting, and she is compiling those into a handbook for the next legislative intern. Teresa Holt added that Justine Sheehan has requested that the Council get a torch like the one Key had.

UPDATE ON CURRENT LEGISLATION

Autism

Senate Bill 74 on autism insurance has moved to the House Health and Social Services committee and is waiting for Representative Keller to schedule a hearing on it. It now has 16 cross-sponsors, and the Council is asking people to continue to follow up with thank-yous to legislators who have signed on and requests to those who have not, and to urge other legislators and Representative Keller's constituents to talk to him about it.

SESA

House Bill 198 was last heard on February 6th and is still in the Education Committee.

Complex Behavior Collaborative

House Bill 285, the budget bill, took public testimony on Monday and Tuesday of this week, and after it is closed out, the Senate will do the same. Teresa will forward any Senate request to call in for public testimony, but they usually come with less than 48 hours' notice.

House Finance Sub-committee closeout

Teresa Holt stated that the \$200,000 for Rural Transition services has been taken out of base funding and put back in as one-time funding, which often leads to not being funded the next year, so the Council may have to make that a priority for next year. Rural Transition camps create work opportunities for students with disabilities to help prepare them for the transition from school to work and adulthood.

HCBS Waiver Regulations Update

On Monday, March 12th, from 1 to 4 p.m. there will be another opportunity to call in and listen to the Department's discussion and comment period. Teresa Holt cautioned that about 300 people call in, so opportunities to participate will be minimal. Teresa noted that the DD Committee has an all-day meeting planned on March 27 to go over 14 pages of comments and make it official before forwarding them to Millie and Eric and then the Department; the Disability Law Center will be attending, and Council members are welcome to participate.

Steve Lesko explained that Hope is trying a new, realistic approach to work with the State by showing examples of people that service providers believe will be hurt by the new regulations and challenging the State to show that they are wrong. Steve stated that Hope is still awaiting a response from the Department to the request to sit down together and review this.

Teresa Holt added that AADD had spent two days prior to Key going over the regulations, and afterward Teresa was still not confident about how to present their comments appropriately. She talked with Jeff Jessee and he offered some funding to hire an attorney to do some legal analysis and help write some recommendations.

Teresa Holt noted that the Legislative Committee will need to make sure people call in and give comments during the new comment period when the regulations come out. Teresa urged committee members who haven't been involved in the process yet to go to the SDS website and review the information that is posted about the regulations, accessible through a link on the front page.

Vulnerable Adults

Teresa Holt stated that Senate Bill 86 strengthening the laws against financial exploitation of vulnerable adults is now in House Finance and was last heard on March 2nd, so now it has to go to Rules and then to the House floor for a vote. If there is a hearing and public testimony is allowed, Teresa will let people know.

Permanent FASD Day

Senate Bill 127, which establishes September 9th as permanent FASD Day, passed the Senate in February and was last heard in the House HSS Committee.

Teresa noted that Jasmine's latest legislative alert includes an app that can be downloaded which will keep the legislative calendar up to date on your iPhone or iPad. Legislative issues will be changing on a daily basis over the next month.

VALENTINE'S CARD UPDATE

David Flynn noted that he had sent thank-yous in a Valentine's card format. Teresa commented that she had received about 20 e-mails from people who had sent cards, and that when Millie Ryan was in Juneau on Monday, she heard a lot of feedback from legislators who were surprised at how many thank-you cards they were receiving. David Flynn commented that

the card campaign is having a positive effect, and Council members and their associates should keep it up.

OTHER INFORMATION FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Banarsi Lal remarked that at a meeting of the Pioneer Homes advisory board, he talked about the Complex Behavior Collaborative, and thought that people were very supportive. Anthony Cravalho noted that he heard people at Key still using the word “Hub” for the CBC, and it’s important to get everyone to use the correct terminology.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

David Flynn noted that the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 12th, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.