



LATE DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON HUMAN SERVICES AND PUBLIC HOUSING AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senate Concurrent Resolution 18/Senate Resolution 12 – Requesting the State Department of Defense to Convene a Statewide Task Force to Advise the Civil Defense Division on the Needs of Individuals with Disabilities and Special Health Needs

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) appreciates the intent of the Legislature to address the very important issue of disaster preparedness for people with disabilities and special health needs. Senate Concurrent Resolution 18/Senate Resolution 12 requests the State Department of Defense convene a statewide task force to advise the Civil Defense Division on the needs of individuals with disabilities and special health needs.

Our office staffs and coordinates the Interagency Working Group that produced the "Interagency Action Plan for the Emergency Preparedness of People with Disabilities and Special Health Needs" which was updated in February 2008. This group includes representatives from state and county agencies as active participants, as well as representatives from key disability organizations. In October 2007, five (5) statewide forums were conducted to obtain input from over 200 people in the community to assist in policy and program development through this planning process. Tremendous progress has been made in this area of bringing people to the table to provide advice and guidance on this very important issue.

As such, we feel that Senate Concurrent Resolution 18/Senate Resolution 12 convening a Task Force is not only unnecessary but makes the process more cumbersome than needed. Currently, any agency serving people who are elderly or who have disabilities or any disaster response entity desiring active participation are welcome to attend meetings. This has allowed flexibility to expand the Working Group as needed when new issues arise.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chairperson
Legislative Committee

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