



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, Room 101 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96814
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V/TDD) • Fax (808) 586-8129

LATE
Testimony

March 15, 2011

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Senate Bill 1417 - Relating to the State Rehabilitation Council

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) does not have a position on Senate Bill 1417 that reduces the number of members on the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) from twenty-one to fifteen. However, we do offer comments

Groups identified to have representatives on the SRC have not been modified with the proposed reduction in the number of members who will serve on the Council. One member identified from each specific category totals thirteen, leaving only two additional members who may be individuals with disabilities. DCAB is concerned that when recruiting members from each category and from each county, the number of individuals with disabilities serving on the Council will also be reduced. The SRC represents a body whose primary goal is employment of individuals with disabilities. We do not see how a reduction in number will be possible and still ensure that a majority or fifty-one percent of the membership are individuals with disabilities. It is our sincere hope that there is a means to ensure that the interest and voice of people with disabilities are not under-represented or reduced when membership on the SRC is decreased to fifteen in the event this bill passes.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

BARBARA FISCHLOWITZ-LEONG
Chairperson
Legislative Committee

FRANCINE WAI
Executive Director

LATE Testimony

From: PL Fritz (PLF) [plf@fritzhq.com]
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2011 6:22 PM
To: HUS testimony
Subject: Testimony SB1417SD1
Attachments: 2011 Legis 2011.02.10 HUS Testimony SB1417 SRC reduction in members.pdf

Dear Sir or Madam:

Enclosed is the testimony of Peter L Fritz on SB1417 SD1. The hearing was on March 14, 2011. This testimony is submitted at the request of the Chair to supplement my oral testimony at the hearing. Please call me at 426.0000 if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Peter L Fritz

Peter Fritz
2229 Cooper Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822-1711
plf@fritzhq.com

Internal Revenue Service Circular 230 Disclosure: As provided for in Treasury Regulations, advice (if any) relating to federal taxes that is contained in this communication (including attachments) is not intended or written to be used, and cannot be used, for the purpose of (1) avoiding penalties under the Internal Revenue Code or (2) promoting, marketing or recommending to another party any plan or arrangement addressed herein.

Note: The information contained in this message may be attorney-client privileged and confidential and protected from disclosure. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or an employee or agent responsible for delivering this message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify us immediately by replying to the message and deleting it from your computer. Thank you.

**THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2011**

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Hearing date: March 15, 2011

Testimony on S.B. 1417, SD1

(Relating To The State Rehabilitation Council)

Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Jordan, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide **comments** concerning S.B. 1417, SD1.

My name is Peter Fritz. I served two terms on the Rehabilitation Advisory Council, the predecessor to the State Rehabilitation Council ("SRC"). For two years, I was the Chairperson of the Council. I am an attorney and an individual with a hearing disability. I offer comments to supplement my oral testimony at the hearing on March 14, 2011. My comments are based on my service on the Rehabilitation Advisory Council, my service as a member of the Disability and Communication Access Board, my personal experience with a sister who has a moderate disability, and my own experience as an individual with a disability.

This bill would reduce the number of State Rehabilitation Council members from 21 to 15. I am concerned that the reduction in number would mean that all interest of the disabled community would not be adequately represented.

I offer the following comments:

- The SRC provide feedback to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation ("DVR"). Federal law requires that the SRC have diverse membership. Membership consists of consumers, parents of children with disabilities, service providers, a vocational rehabilitation counselor, and members of private industry.
- The SRC uses information from its members to help develop the State Plan which guides DVR as to how to provide services to individuals with disabilities. In addition, the SRC also conducts quality control surveys to measure the effectiveness of the services being provided.
- I am concerned that any reduction in the number of Council members could cause certain sectors to be underrepresented. The federal minimum requirement of 15 members may be appropriate for the mainland, but could also be totally inadequate when dealing with the difficulties of providing services over all of the islands. It is my personal opinion that the number of members should not be reduced.
- During the period that I served on the Rehabilitation Advisory Council, we always met quorum. I attribute this to the active role that DVR took in contacting members prior to meetings and contacting various organizations in Hawaii for recommendations for individuals to serve on the SRC.

- According to testimony by DVR at a hearing before the Senate Committee on Human Services, the only effort made to find new members for the SRC was to post a notice on the Governor's website. It has been my experience that the majority of individuals who subsequently became members of the Rehabilitation Advisory Council or the SRC, were contacted by DVR or agencies that had been contacted by DVR.
- DVR needs to take a more active role in finding committed members and organizing meetings. It is more likely than not that if DVR takes a more active role with respect to the SRC, the quorum issue can be resolved.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert A. O'Leary". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.