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## TESTIMONY

**BILL: SB 137 Establishes Legislative Committee on Persons with Disabilities**

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

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Good afternoon Chairman Giunchigliani and members of the Committee. I am Mary Liveratti, Deputy Director of the Department of Human Resources. I am here to provide information on SB 137, which creates the legislative committee on persons with disabilities.

On behalf of the Department of Human Resources, we would like to commend the Legislative Commission's Subcommittee to Study the State Program for Providing Services to Persons with Disabilities for their work during the interim. It was a pleasure working with Chairperson Dina Titus and the committee. We especially appreciate the collaboration between the committee's work and our efforts in the strategic planning process authorized by AB 513 during the last legislative session.

SB 137 would require the Department of Human Resources to examine the feasibility of amending the Medicaid State Plan to authorize Medicaid benefits for community based services for a person who relocates from a skilled or intermediate nursing facility to a community based setting. To be

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ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, PROCEDURES, & ETHICS  
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SUBMITTED BY: Mary Liveratti

eligible for these services, a person would have to meet three conditions. First, the person must be assessed and determined to be living in an unnecessarily restrictive residential environment. Second, the person must relocate from a nursing facility to community based care and last, Medicaid benefits must have been used to pay for the cost of care for that person while in the nursing facility. The Strategic Plan for People with Disabilities recommended that existing policy be amended to allow the concept of "money following the person" for individuals assessed to be in unnecessarily restrictive residential environments. This bill would require the Department of Human Resources to submit a report by July 1, 2004 to the Legislative Committee on the results of the feasibility study to amend the State Plan for Medicaid.

In addition, SB 137 would require the Department of Human Resources to submit a report annually to the Committee, which would include information on three items:

- 1) The expansion of the program established pursuant to NRS 422.2715, which is known as HIWA, Health Insurance for Work Advancement. I would like to note for the record that this item was also a recommendation in the Strategic Plan and funding for this program is included in the Executive Budget, Budget Account 3243, E-425.
- 2) The progress made by the Department toward the goal of providing comprehensive health care coverage to persons with a disability who lose benefits due to employment, have an income above the federal poverty level and are unable to obtain insurance coverage from other sources.

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- 3) The impact of assessments made of persons with disabilities to determine if they are living in an unnecessarily restrictive residential environment.

We believe these reports will contribute to the continuing oversight and accountability of the Strategic Plan.

I would be pleased to answer any questions the committee may have.

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