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TESTIMONY

BILL: SCR 10 Urges Governor and agencies of Executive Branch to take certain actions concerning persons with disabilities

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

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Good morning Chairman Manendo and members of the Committee. I am Mary Liveratti, Deputy Director of the Department of Human Resources. SCR 10 supports the work of the Task Force on Disabilities and the Strategic Plan for People with Disabilities, authorized by AB 513 during the last legislative session. We would like to express our appreciation to Senator Dina Titus and the Legislative Commission's Subcommittee to Study the State Program for Providing Services to Persons with Disabilities. We were able to coordinate the efforts of the strategic plan task force with the activities of the subcommittee which benefited both groups.

As Task Force Chairman Brian Lahren indicated in the Plan, "the Strategic Plan was the product of nearly two years of work and hundreds of voices of people with disabilities, their families, providers and advocates. It has been carefully structured to insure adherence to U. S. Supreme Court Olmstead provisions and to the principles of inclusive, independent living for all Nevadans."

As indicated in item one of this bill, the Strategic Plan has been recognized as an effective Olmstead Plan. Section five of the Plan contains a report by Tony Records, who is a nationally known authority on Olmstead issues, regarding the Plan's relationship to Olmstead. In his report, Mr. Records states, "Nevada's Strategic Plan has taken compliance with Olmstead requirements quite seriously. From the draft planning documents reviewed, it appears the Task Force has addressed each of the Olmstead compliance concerns..." ~~We have prepared a handout on the Executive Budget decision units which address Olmstead issues.~~

Item two of this bill concerns identifying and transferring persons with disabilities who are in institutional care into the community with appropriate supports. SB 137 also addresses this issue.

Item three of the bill requires identification of persons with disabilities who reside in the community who are at risk of being improperly institutionalized. A number of people in the community are already identified and are on waiting lists for services. The Executive Budget contains several decision units which would address waiting lists for the Medicaid Waivers for people with disabilities and the elderly.

We agree wholeheartedly with item four of the bill, which expresses the philosophy that persons with disabilities and services be considered in a

more holistic manner when planning budgets and making decisions concerning programs. The transfer of the Office of Community Based Services from DETR and the creation of the Office of Disability Services within the Department of Human Resources, is included in the Executive Budget and will enable a more comprehensive approach to policy development, budgeting and planning. This Office will also assist in item five, which considers the needs for persons with severe disabilities who do not qualify for Medicaid services, but who are unable to afford the services they need.

I hope this information is helpful to you. I would be pleased to answer any questions the committee may have.