

## DISCLAIMER

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Dear attendees to the Legislative Hearing or whatever this significant gathering is. It was requested that I attend this meeting on behalf of the Southern Nevada Personal Assistance Program, otherwise known as the "PASP Program." Because of my work schedule, I am not able to attend in person and suggested that I be given the opportunity to express my input as to how important the PASP Program is by way of videotape, audiotape or a written letter. I hope individual reading this brief exhortation filled with appreciative babbling, does so with similar inflection, passion and enthusiasm. Not likely, but we will move along any way.

As an introduction to myself, my name is Richard Rapp and I am a native born "Las Vegan." That may not mean much to some of you, but for my fellow "Las Vegan Brothers and Sisters," this is something that we have a sense of pride about.

✓ I ask you "Las Vegan Natives" to just hold your hand up for a moment and those of you sitting next to one of us, just look at the sense of pride in their demeanor.

(Pause)

I am not exactly sure what this extra sense of pride is, but we have it. And, you don't have it, whatever it is. Us "Las Vegas's" are proud to be who we are and we also pride ourselves in giving back to our community. If this were not so, the local folks next to you would not be at this meeting. I am a graduate of Southern Nevada Vocational Technical Center, class of 1976 and have an endearing pride for the Local High School that I graduated from. I have worked in numerous trades in this valley, ranging from the construction industry, ranching/farming industry, electronics repair, land and property management, the hotel and culinary industry to mention a few past areas of employment and currently have been working in the Las Vegas Valley area from September of 1989 until the present as a psychotherapist.

We won't digress into the specifics of a psychotherapist and what one does in that field.

By the way, do you know the difference between a psychiatrist and God?

Pretty simple, God does not think that he is a psychiatrist.  
Well, I am not a psychiatrist I am a psychotherapist and I am not God.

Which reminds me. Were we allowed to say "God?" I guess we said "God" and anyway that topic is probably for another legislative discussion.

What we will focus on is that it is my personal conviction as well as mission to give back to my community in a significant way. As a part of this conviction, a great majority of my work has been, is and always will be to work with Nonprofit Organizations to assist our community. My affiliation has been with numerous organizations in our valley.

Since I am not going to brag, I will let the person reading this letter, or whatever this written correspondence is, familiarize yourself with the few of the agencies and organizations I have been and I am associated with. Family Counseling Center, Child Sexual Abuse Treatment Program, Family And Child Treatment of Southern Nevada, the District Attorney's Office Victims Witness Program, the State of Nevada Victims of Crimes Administration, the Juvenile Court System, the Department of Child Welfare or Division of Child of Family Services (I have trouble remembering exactly who they are and understand that they're in the process of restructuring), the Division of Aging, the State Mental Health System, Mojave Mental Health, West Care, Child Protective Services. There are others that I work with and consult with as a mental health provider and really don't have time to mention all of them.

Oh! Did I mention that I work as a consultant to numerous churches of numerous denominations within the Valley? Amazingly, there are numerous pastors and clergy who recognize that often times their limitations with time, experience and training leave them unable to meet the needs of individuals with significant mental health needs. A striking sense of maturity on their part and boy do they keep me busy.

I do have some credentials, which does not mean a whole lot.

I have met numerous people with marvelous university training, who were mentally "a few credits short of a degree." If you know what I mean?

Briefly, to be a little bit serious, but not too much so, because serious often times can be quite boring.

A little, bit more about who I am and why this person is reading a letter written by myself. Besides being a Native of Las Vegas, at a young age, let's say almost nineteen years old, I was involved in a motor vehicle accident, whereby an alcohol impaired driver broadsided my vehicle leaving me paralyzed from the shoulders down. Now at about this time you might be wondering how I managed to work so much prior to sustaining this injury, or you might just be more interested in hearing the rest of the details of this saga. To answer the first question, I began working at a very young age and enjoyed it.

I'm not sure if I mentioned that I am from a family of seven children. That my father is a first generation immigrant from East Germany that moved Las Vegas when he was seventeen years old, after surviving the atrocities of the Nazi Regime and the countless nights that he spent in bomb shelters during air raids. If not, consider it mentioned and maybe his pride in being a "Las Vegan," an American citizen and a father has a great deal to do with my convictions to serve others.

Moving right along, on September 11, 1977 my life was dramatically changed with the realities of being paralyzed. I spent about one-year inpatient in a Spiral Cord Rehabilitation Hospital and an additional year in Outpatient Occupational and Physical Therapy. Subsequent to 2 formal years of rehabilitation, rehabilitation, like life, learning and being healthy, is a continual process. With the tremendous support of my immediate family, extended family and numerous fellow "Las Vegas's," I have had the opportunity to complete a few years of education beyond high school. I am proud to say that I graduated from Clark County Community College, now known as Community College of Southern Nevada, a stepping stone to my primary objective.

For those of you who are supporters of the Committee College System, continue to do so. It is an invaluable resource.

Additionally, I have had the opportunity to complete a couple of Bachelor's degrees from California Baptist College, now known as California Baptist University. Do you hear a theme of change here?

Additionally, I also have had the opportunity to complete a Masters Degree in Counseling Psychology and as mentioned earlier, keep quite busy working as a psychotherapist, not a psychiatrist. My schedule is hectic and quite busy with my day beginning about 5:00 a.m. and ending around 10:00 p.m. on the slow days. I have a very active personal life and truly enjoy people.

You're probably wondering what this has to do with the Southern Nevada PAS Program? Or maybe you're not. The PAS Program enables me to accomplish the simple activities of daily life, like dressing, brushing teeth, moving from the bed to the wheelchair and other such small activities. Without this assistance, I would be unable to continue with the work that I try to provide and giving back to the community. Prior to the assistance of the PAS Program, I was responsible for \$1500.00 to \$2000.00 per month in expenses just to meet basic daily needs. During the time waiting to be on the PAS Program, it was necessary for me to work 7 days per week and 6 of those 7 days, I was having to work 10 to 12 hours daily to afford personal care assistance. Along with the PAS Program assisting with relieving me of this overwhelming financial obligation, it is also their mission to have accountability for caregivers that one does not have one they are paying for private caregivers for personal care. If The PAS Program was not currently in existence, I'm not sure if I would be able to continue to pursue the goals of meeting community needs as well as maintaining independence. In addition, I would have to fire three employees that

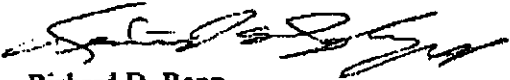
work for my office, not only taking away from my independence but putting three more people on unemployment.

Hopefully with a little humor and some sincerity, those of you at this meeting can see that the Southern Nevada PAS Program serves a great purpose. It allows myself personal independence, caregivers that have training and accountability, lowers my personal cost of living and allows me to be a productive contributor to our community.

Without the PAS Program, the likelihood of myself maintaining independence is greatly compromised and the potential for needing institutionalized care is greatly increased.

Thank you for your consideration and allowing this input. I look forward to the opportunity to speak to you in person at the next legislative meeting.

Humorously and Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard D. Rapp', written in a cursive style.

Richard D. Rapp