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February 3, 2020

Senator Martin, Chairman
Senate Health & Welfare Committee
Statehouse
Boise, ID 83720

Dear Chairman Martin and Members of the Committee:

The Council on Developmental Disabilities is authorized by federal and state law to monitor service systems and policies and to advocate for improved services that enable Idahoans with developmental disabilities to live meaningful lives, included in their home communities. The Council is comprised of 23 volunteers appointed by the Governor.

The Council supports House Bill 311.

The replacement of a Licensed Independent Practitioner in place of a physician is a practical solution to an increasingly common problem for the guardianship evaluation committees. As you are already aware, it is difficult to find a physician in our rural areas.

This legislation is also consistent with the direction the state is moving with respect to guardianships for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. I would like to recognize the work this division has done to help transition from a medical model of treatment, as in viewing people with developmental disabilities as sick, broken, or in need of "fixing." Our state is moving to the practice of using "Supported Decision Making," which is an alternative to guardianships. Supported decision making is a way for an adult with a disability to make their own decisions by using friends, family members, and other people they trust to:

- Help understand issues and choices
- Ask questions
- Receive explanations in a way that makes sense to the person

The division has provided training to all staff on supported decision making and alternatives to guardianship. When evaluation committee members review individual guardianship cases, they are using the supported decision-making framework to evaluate the necessity of continued guardianship.

The Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities applauds the efforts the division is making to assist adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to make informed decisions. The division is working to create a culture that supports the individual's ability to exercise their rights to make important life decisions.

Thank you for considering the Council's comments.

Sincerely,

Richelle Tierney
Policy Analyst