

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 14, 2008

TO: All Members of the Delaware State Senate
and House of Representatives

FROM: Ms. Daniese McMullin-Powell
Chairperson
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: H.B. 301 (Foster Child Higher Education Benefit)

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed H.B. 301 which extends the Financial Assistance for Higher Education grants to foster children in the care of State who graduate from high school or turn eighteen while still in foster care. As background, the State currently offers higher education assistance to certain classes of children (ages 16-24), including children of deceased veterans, prisoners of war, and state police killed in the line of duty. See Title 14 Del.C. §§3451-3452. Benefits are limited to 4 years of tuition and fees and may vary based on attendance at an in-state versus out-of-state education institution.

H.B. 301 would expand eligibility to children in foster care in the State of Delaware as of their 18th birthday or graduation from high school. This is a traditionally underserved “at risk” population. Foster children “aging out” of the foster care system have historically been provided few supports. The DSCYF has recently been offering more transitional services to better prepare them for adulthood. This bill would be of great benefit to such children. SCPD endorses the proposed legislation subject to correction of a technical error, i.e., the reference to “§3452e” in line 4 should be to “3452(a)(1)e”.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions regarding our position on the proposed legislation.

cc: The Honorable Ruth Ann Minner
Governor’s Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens
Developmental Disabilities Council

Hb301 foster child ed 3-08