



STATE OF DELAWARE  
STATE COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES  
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**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: June 7, 2011

TO: All Members of the Delaware State ~~Senate~~

FROM: Ms. Daniese McMullin-Powell <sup>DMP/kit</sup> Chairperson  
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: H.B. 91 [Disability References in Code & Publications]

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed H.B. 91 which requires all new state laws and publications to avoid language that is disrespectful and/or offensive to individuals with disabilities. A violation of this bill is not grounds to invalidate any new state law or publication and the bill does not apply to terms required by federal law or regulation, or state statute.

SCPD endorses the proposed legislation. For too long, persons with disabilities have been subjected to devaluation, marginalization, prejudice and more. The first way to devalue someone is through language. The intent of the legislation is to proactively use People First Language (PFL) in future state legislation and publications when referring to individuals with disabilities. PFL promotes dignity and community inclusion for people with disabilities and emphasizes that individuals with disabilities are people first, and that their disabilities are secondary. Using PFL and eliminating old, prejudicial, and hurtful descriptors can help move us in a new direction.

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

cc: The Honorable Jack A. Markell  
Mr. Brian Hartman, Esq.  
Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens  
Developmental Disabilities Council