

Laura Fussell's statement.

The state of Nevada agencies ADSD and DETR's response to the letter approved by this Commission as prepared by the employment subcommittee was over reactive and historically uncharacteristic.

There was a misinterpretation of an implied "tone", "demands" and a "veiled threat" that simply were not included in that letter. Instead of the agency leaders seeking out clarification to better understand the background to this letter, incorrect assumptions were made, conclusions drawn and decisions enacted that further cut off the access of Deaf/hard of hearing/DeafBlind Nevadans from equal services and information. Certainly, these consequences were not intentional.

DETR Vocational Rehabilitation chose to remove of all their subject matter experts who were current employees from their approved voluntary roles with the Commission and expressed that there was an apparent lack of understanding of how politics actually work in Nevada and that the employees should each take some time to study up on that before considering to serve in any future capacity with the Commission. No resources or mentor recommendations were provided nor clear timelines. Surely, this was an oversight as professional development is a featured strategic priority for all BVR employees.

The gatekeeping, silencing and lack of consideration for Deaf, hard of hearing and DeafBlind community members from the state of Nevada has to stop. With collaborative efforts and continued communication, I know these past mistakes won't be repeated. I am dedicated to the work needed to make these essential improvements that will serve the full access and opportunities of Deaf, hard of hearing and DeafBlind community members statewide.

Laura Fussell - former state vocational rehabilitation counselor