

**Public Comment from the Legislative Subcommittee meeting on
1.17.2024**

Public Comment:

- Eric Wilcox chair of the education subcommittee and parent of a deaf child, I wanted to comment on three things briefly that came as part of the discussion that I had some input on. One, the general notion that many state agencies are not adhering to the ADA and IDEA federal laws is a point that's been made in public comment to the commission on a number of occasions and number of forums and I want to point out two states were pointed out as having state laws that were meant to add extra teeth to enforcement of those laws in their state, one is the New Jersey law against discrimination and the other is New York State human rights law. That's one place we could consider looking for laws we could add to the legislation in Nevada. Regarding the lack of services that used to be provided to the Deaf that now are not, I did reach out to the Aging and Disability Services leadership based on a request that I got for the Las Vegas deaf Seniors to follow up with them. We asked specifically for accounting of how the money namely the telecommunications surcharge funds, which is supposed to fund a Deaf center in the state, which is supposed to be providing those social services and accounting of how the money has been spent recently because presumably they're spending the money but certainly the Deaf people are not getting the services as has been reported to the commission many times. And I also asked them for clarification on where the rules are in the code or in the statute regarding the requirement that was put on the Deaf Centers of Nevada for matching funds and the limitations in how much of the surcharge funds could be used for the administration of the Deaf Centers because that's ultimately what caused the demise of the Deaf center was they couldn't use the money they were getting from the state to run the Deaf Centers, and they had this huge matching fund obligation that they couldn't meet because there's not a deep well of donors donating large sums of private money for the services. So, I asked for clarification on that a because if we don't fix that problem probably nobody will be able to run a Deaf center properly in the state. About LEAD-K, I put in the chat if anybody is interested, it is in the statues NRS 388.518 and .519. That's where the LEAD-K language is on language acquisition and benchmarks for Deaf kids, and I put the wrong date in chat. It was 2019 that it was added to the statute. The education

subcommittee is working or has been following up with the Department of Education on this, they're supposedly working on language acquisition benchmarks. But it's clear there's no expertise in the Department of Education on this topic at all. We've offered to be a resource for them to put them in contact with people in other states or people within this state who can help them. They haven't taken us up on that.

- Susan Beckett, The ACLU has sued the Clark County detention center and Las Vegas metropolitan police department. They have been doing an investigation on Deaf and detained since April of 2021. There are items, I put it on my Facebook because I'm concerned about this because I've been actually hearing from people in the court system that there are no interpreters in the courts, they're not there, or they get the person in from the jail, the system knows that the person is deaf and doesn't bother to call an interpreter until the time of hearing. The judge gets upset. Makes the person go back and gets put in for another day. But this has been two years, they're asking for things like install video phone, offer ASL interpreters, require them, which is already required but not happening. So, there's a major lawsuit and the ACLU is involved, and I happen to know one of the attorneys that is suing. So, if you want to voice it, please contact the ACLU because any support that they can have regarding things with the Deaf and hard of hearing and just the minimum of an ASL interpreter for your court hearing.