

Disability Rights Legal Center

DRLC

Formerly Western Law Center For Disability Rights

E-mail: Eve.Hill@LLS.edu

April 25, 2007

Honorable Christine Kehoe
State Capitol #4038
Sacramento, CA 95814

SB 426 (Kehoe) Emergency Services:
Access & Functional Needs Coordination

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Senator Kehoe:

The Disability Rights Legal Center (DLRC) joins the California disability community in supporting SB 426. Thank you for your support of the bill.

Founded in 1975, the DRLC is a private nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the rights of people with disabilities and the public interest in, and awareness of those rights by providing legal and related services. The Cancer Legal Resource Center, a program of the DRLC celebrating its 10th year, assists callers from across the nation with an array of legal issues related to cancer, including access to health care and health insurance.

In California, and the nation there has been a consistent failure to serve individuals with disabilities of all ages in regards to disaster preparedness, response and recovery. SB 462 establishes a Deputy Director position in the Office of Emergency Services who would be responsible for preparedness, response and recovery services for individuals with functional limitations.

In recent California fires, people with hearing disabilities were unable to obtain critical information including evacuation and shelter instructions, wheelchair accessible vehicles were unavailable to assist with evacuation, and guide dogs were prohibited in emergency shelters.

This bill would establish a Deputy Director of Access and Functional Needs who will be charged with developing a plan to meet the diverse needs of over 23% of Californians who have difficulty seeing, walking, hearing, learning, thinking, speaking and/or breathing.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eve L. Hill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "E".

Eve L. Hill

Cc: Members Senate Appropriations
Teresa Favuzzi, CFILC