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April 11, 2016

To: Representative Ann Pugh, House Human Services Chairperson
From: Monica Hutt, Commissioner
Re: Vermont Advisory Council for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind and S. 66

In response to the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living's (DAIL) recent testimony related to S. 66 and the proposed formation of a Vermont Council for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deafblind, I wanted to offer some additional amendments and an affirmation of no new funding required for the Council for DAIL.

In reviewing the current draft of the bill, the subcommittee of the current task force would like to formally add one member to the proposed Council:

- the Director of the Vermont Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (VTEHDI) Project.

We will maintain the AHS Secretary's designee as a standing member of the Council. All other proposed members should remain as listed in the current draft of the bill.

Additionally, I wanted to assure the Committee that the creation of the Council will not involve a new funding request from the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living. Currently, DAIL has been funding stipends for Council members not otherwise reimbursed for their attendance and funding interpreters necessary for the adult and seniors subcommittees. We have absorbed those costs within our existing budget and do not require additional funds to support the functioning of the Council.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any additional questions or concerns.

Thank you.