

1 **RESOLUTION URGING STATE AGENCIES TO**
2 **UPDATE REFERENCES TO MENTAL**
3 **RETARDATION**

4 2006 GENERAL SESSION

5 STATE OF UTAH

6 **Chief Sponsor: David L. Hogue**

7 Senate Sponsor: John W. Hickman

8
9 **LONG TITLE**

10 **General Description:**

11 This joint resolution of the Legislature urges state agencies to replace "mental
12 retardation" references in their documents with a more respectful description.

13 **Highlighted Provisions:**

14 This resolution:

15 ▶ urges state agencies to change the language in state documents that makes reference
16 to "mental retardation" and use a term that reflects increased sensitivity to those
17 who experience this disability; and

18 ▶ recommends that state agencies review and consider language currently used by
19 other states that have previously changed their references.

20 **Special Clauses:**

21 None

22
23 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

24 WHEREAS, the stigma attached to the phrase "mental retardation" creates an
25 unwarranted burden on those who experience this intellectual disability;

26 WHEREAS, in some cases government agencies inadvertently perpetuate this burden
27 by continuing to use this archaic term;



28 WHEREAS, this phrase should be changed to reflect a sensitivity to those who
29 experience this disability;

30 WHEREAS, many government agencies throughout the United States have altered their
31 documents to refer to these individuals as persons with a disability;

32 WHEREAS, the use of "persons with a disability" removes a measure of the sting and
33 stigma suffered by those who must struggle with this disability every day of their lives; and

34 WHEREAS, Utah state agencies should take deliberate steps to update their documents
35 to reflect this more sensitive reference to characterize those who experience this disability:

36 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah
37 urges Utah's state agencies to review their official documents and replace current references to
38 "mental retardation" with an alternative that reflects increased sensitivity to those who
39 experience this disability.

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature encourages state agencies to review
41 and consider alternative references to this disability that are used by other states.

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Department
43 of Human Resources, the Utah Developmental Disabilities Council, the Department of Health,
44 the Department of Human Services, and People First.

Legislative Review Note
as of 1-10-06 3:14 PM

Based on a limited legal review, this legislation has not been determined to have a high probability of being held unconstitutional.

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel