SPONSOR: Sen. Poore & Sen. Lavelle

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
148th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 13

DECLARING TODAY AS ABILITY NETWORK OF DELAWARE BRAND LAUNCH AND ADVOCACY DAY.

WHEREAS, for nearly three decades, the Delaware Association of Rehabilitation Facilities ("DelARF") has been committed to serving its organizational members, the community service providers who deliver direct services to Delawareans with disabilities who need assistance in community life, as well as to those who need treatment for substance use and mental health disorders; and

WHEREAS, the vision DelARF has pursued over the last 29 years has been to increase opportunities for people with disabilities and other disadvantages to live, learn, and work in their local communities; and

WHEREAS, by working with its members, state government, and other organizations, DelARF has pursued the removal of physical, economic, and social barriers so that persons with disabilities and others seeking to become more independent can achieve full and productive lives; and

WHEREAS, today, March 23, 2016, marks a new beginning for DelARF, this being the date when DelARF begins doing business as the Ability Network of Delaware ("A.N.D."); and

WHEREAS, this new identity more accurately reflects the focus of the Association's membership on the strengths of the people they serve and the rich community interactions they develop, rather than on the limitations and restrictions they experience; and

WHEREAS, A.N.D. will continue the Association's work as a catalyst for a broad-based, powerful coalition of stakeholders in the service system in Delaware and beyond, which includes service recipients, family members, and advocates; and

WHEREAS, A.N.D. is committed to creating innovative, exemplary, and cost-effective services for all persons with disabilities and other life challenges; and

WHEREAS, the 38 Delaware non-profits that A.N.D. represents employ a dedicated workforce of thousands of direct care professionals who perform some of the most challenging work in the state; and

WHEREAS, in an ongoing effort to elevate the role of this important workforce, for the last 6 years A.N.D.'s annual Direct Support Professionals ("DSP") Day has honored the workers who provide services to so many Delawareans; and

WHEREAS, the event has grown from its beginnings as a small gathering of people in Rodney Square to the 400 people who attended the 2015 DSP Day at the Chase Center on the Riverfront, providing the recognition that these dedicated service workers so rightfully deserve; and

WHEREAS, A.N.D. has also partnered with community service providers in 2015 in a successful State Use program, which employed 598 Delawareans with disabilities in janitorial services, temporary employment positions, and document destruction; and

WHEREAS, the employment of these individuals in 2015 alone resulted in a savings to the state of $1,379,586, because they were no longer fully dependent on government entitlements; and

WHEREAS, of equal importance to the nearly 600 people employed in the program was the intangible benefits they derived from employment, which include increased feelings of independence and sense of self-worth from being able to support themselves, while providing valued services to the State of Delaware;

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the 148th General Assembly that March 23, 2016 is declared as Ability Network of Delaware Brand Launch and Advocacy Day.

SYNOPSIS

This Resolution declares March 23, 2016 as Ability Network of Delaware Brand Launch and Advocacy Day.

Author: Senator Poore