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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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April 30, 2012

The Honorable Robert F. McDonnell
Office of the Governor
Patrick Henry Building, 3rd Floor
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

RE: House Bill 1230

Dear Governor McDonnell:

The General Assembly passed House Bill 1230, calling for the privatization of the Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy. The General Assembly accepted in part your suggested changes and the bill is now before you for final consideration.

On April 25, 2012, the Governing Board of the Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy (VOPA) took several steps in support of VOPA's transition to a private, non-profit entity. The Board directed the staff of VOPA to prepare a report on the implications of conversion to a private, non-profit entity, including the considerations raised in your suggested changes. VOPA will provide this report to the Disability Commission and to the Chairmen of the Senate Committee on Education and Health and the House Committee on Health, Education and Welfare. We hope to be able to discuss a draft of the report with you or the Secretary of Health and Human Resources prior to finalizing it, to be certain that it addresses any additional concerns you might have.

The Board also directed VOPA staff to proceed with the development of a transition plan and to take those initial steps of the transition that can be taken at this time, including the creation of an appropriate non-profit corporation and the registration of the non-profit corporation with the Internal Revenue Service. VOPA intends to present its proposed transition plan to you and the relevant legislative committees before December 1, 2012.

The Governing Board of the Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy supports VOPA's transition to a private, non-profit entity, consistent with its mission and resources. If at any point it becomes clear that this transition will not improve VOPA's ability to serve Virginians with disabilities, the Board will abandon the effort. The patron of HB1230, Delegate Orrock, has given us his commitment to work with our leadership to achieve the best possible outcome for people with disabilities.

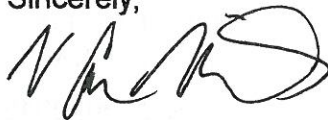
*Know your right to vote visit www.vopa.virginia.gov
Virginia's Protection and Advocacy System
Serving Persons with Disabilities*

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I hope this information is helpful to you as you consider HB1230. Please do not hesitate to contact me if we can provide you with any assurances that will enable you to support the bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Colleen Miller', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

V. Colleen Miller, Esq.
Executive Director