The Honorable Governor Steve Sisolak October 14, 2021

Office of the Governor

One Hundred One North Carson Street

Carson City, Nevada 89701

Dear Honorable Governor Steve Sisolak,

The Nevada Statewide Independent Living Council (NV SILC) mission is to, “advocate for the development of a network of programs, services and options designed to empower Nevadans with disabilities to live independently in the community.” NV SILC evaluates the needs of individuals with disabilities; establishes a State Plan for Independent Living every three years; supports community-based and Independent Living services; and gathers and disseminates pertinent information as well as providing many other supports to coordinate efforts to assist in serving individuals with disabilities.

The NV SILC makes the following recommendations in response to The National Governors’ Association report on “Promoting Employment for People with Disabilities through Statewide Coordination” (this report is included as a separate document):

* We agree there are trends leading strategic opportunities. Remote work and automation open a door for people with disabilities to compete in new sectors. Demand-driven skills training models are essential to consider, and accessible training programs should be the norm. Training programs that are in high demand in Nevada include the medical and behavioral health fields, so we recommend incorporating accessibility for all educational, trade, and certificate programs in these fields.
* To leverage current trends it is also recommended Nevada promote collaboration between employers and supportive services. While Nevada’s Vocational Rehabilitation Agency has models in place to do this, there is far too little funding and the programs are very limited in who can be served. Over 30% of adults in Nevada have a reported disability, but many more do not report or cannot apply for Social Security Disability Income. Therefore, program inclusivity is key to ensuring programs reach all potential participants.

The detailed report includes a four-step template for Nevada’s specific needs. We offer the following comments on the suggested action steps. People with disabilities value self-determination; so, our motto is “Nothing About Us Without Us.” We, therefore, prefer self-directed community supports and should be heard when we express our concerns and ideas. Thus, we request a seat on any committee that will work on this template; and, if needed, we are happy to facilitate one.

We sincerely appreciate this report’s recommendations and urge your consideration our Council’s participation when a plan is ready to move this initiative forward. We believe time is of the essence as we regain our footing on the State’s economy and employment standards.

We look forward to working with you to further the independence of all Nevadans. Our next scheduled meetings are October 14, 2021, & January 13, 2021. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully and in Representation of NV SILC,

Dawn Lyons, NV SILC Executive Director