

2654

Gelnett, Wanda B.

RECEIVED

From: Schalles, Scott R.
Sent: Wednesday, February 20, 2008 10:21 AM
To: Gelnett, Wanda B.
Subject: FW: Disregard

2008 FEB 20 AM 11:12

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

public comment on 2654. Thanks.

-----Original Message-----

From: Allen McQuarrie [mailto:allen@clanmcq.com]
Sent: Monday, February 18, 2008 3:57 PM
To: Schalles, Scott R.
Subject: Fwd: Disregard

Scott:

This fully explains how devastating it is to volunteer to participate in a project promoted as an attempt to make improvements beneficial to those who serve our recovery needs but turns out to be for naught. Allen McQuarrie

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Skip Carroll" <skipcar@verizon.net>
Date: February 17, 2008 8:55:44 PM EST
To: "Allen McQuarrie" <allen@clanmcq.com>
Subject: Re: Disregard

Well put Allen. This is an accurate and thoughtful description of the problems manifest in the DOH.

I'll be very interested in the responses and (hopefully) recommendations which you receive.

I'll very much appreciate seeing them.

I'm sorry that I can't make the meeting on the 20th.

I have a conflict of long standing with the Dems in Chester County.

I had written to Joe Sestack and Bill Walsh about the problem at the time we were asked to communicate with the legislators.

Skip

----- Original Message -----

From: Allen McQuarrie
To: Deb Beck ; Kim P. Bowman ; Babette Benham
Sent: Sunday, February 17, 2008 4:02 PM
Subject: Disregard

The Department of Health has an apparent history of disregarding information, advice, suggestions, lengthy discourse and

recommendations of any kind. Having participated on the Committee for Workforce Development, I found myself very uncomfortable when important recommendations by sub-committees never reached the Steering Committee. This was especially disconcerting when a rather thoughtful and complete sub-committee report was developed by one of the sub-committees other than mine but never surfaced at the steering committee meetings when sub-committee reports were discussed. When I told a member of the sub-committee that this had actually happened, he found it extremely upsetting. The staff contact responsible for the minutes never shared them even though they were complete and well thought out.

Attendance at these meetings, though productive at times, never developed into any meaningful recommendations. In fact, we were told that given the "circumstances," any changes would take years to evolve. "Circumstances" were never defined. Meetings of the group were cancelled, delayed, called off entirely and eventually the efforts of the group came to naught. Meanwhile, the problems facing the addiction treatment workforce continue unabated and as alarming as predicted given nothing whatsoever has been done to develop, fund, offer recommendations to solve problems, issue progress reports, suggest legislation or amend practices.

Meanwhile, as important events swirl around the Department of Health, especially in the field of addiction, no pertinent efforts have been made to reactive the sub-committees or the steering committee. Other states, including New York, New Jersey and Connecticut have long since moved ahead of Pennsylvania in both breadth and depth. We have remained stalled. We have not met in many months and nothing we did prior to the adjournment of our last meeting has produced any results that we have been made aware of as yet. This is an indictment. Yet, I am stunned beyond belief to hear about how the Department of Health has attempted to move with such dispatch to rescind confidentiality regulations. I am not surprised that everyone who had anything to say about the changes of any importance was effectively ignored. This list of those in opposition to the regulations speaks for itself. Had those that opposed the suggested amendments been consulted they either would not have gone forward as such or they could have been productively amended for swift and certain passage if the ideas had any merit.

I am wondering what can be done to bring to light just how impaired the Department of Health is in its deliberations, efforts at progress and fulfillment of its responsibilities. It is heartless to ignore the problems the addiction workforce faces. It appears that someone in the department is relentlessly pursuing a course of action that is

inept. What can we do to meet on our own, share our concerns and elevate the discussion to a point where the Department of Health's Drug and Alcohol Bureau is either reformed or abolished in favor of other more productive alternatives?

Allen McQuarrie
PRO-ACT Co-Chair Bucks County
Chair, Southeast Regional Public Policy Committee