

April 5, 1979

LB 101

SENATOR NEWELL: Mr. President, members of the body, I am offering this amendment and I am offering this amendment because I think it is a reasonable way in which we can provide all individuals who for various reasons have disabilities, have physical disabilities and those physical disabilities being similar in the fact that it provides barriers as Senator Chambers was talking about, barriers that are similar, barriers to employment, barriers to opportunity, barriers to educational opportunity and opportunity of all kinds. I am offering this amendment, not because I don't agree with those individual points that Senator Chambers was offering and those points that Senator Labeledz was making but because I agree that there is much more in similarity than there is in differentiation. Now let me talk about for a moment, about what I think is a possibility and, Senator Chambers, I want to draw special attention to you, in fact, as soon as I make my point I would like to ask you a question. I think that there is a great deal of similarity that this commission could be broadened, the number of individuals being larger. It is sort of like the Department of Health. We have a health board that is made up from various different groups from the health profession. There is, in fact, a need for some coordination here in terms of the whole area of health. We do not need the duplication of two different grantsmen or five different grantsmen or forty different grantsmen for the various departments. We do not need separate executive directors. There are cases, Senator Chambers, that I agree with you and I feel, you know, I am as humane, maybe not as eloquent on these issues but as humane and as feeling for these individuals and for these individual groups but I think that special committees could be set up underneath the commission. For those things that are unique, those problems that are unique, to that individual group, a problem, you know, that deals for the blind would be separate from a problem of those who were physically handicapped in some other way and I think the committees could, in fact, provide this uniqueness and at the same time you would have the entire strength, the unifying strength of bringing all these people with disabilities together on those common problems. Senator Chambers, those problems being again, employment discrimination, discrimination by those who do not have disabilities, the consciousness of their problem and the awareness of their problem and the mutuality of understanding each others problems and then being able to deal with the society that generally does not have those types of problems and for that reason