

Chair Ghanbari, Vice-Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the House Homeland Security Committee, I am writing this letter to address the need for statewide voluntary special needs/disability registry.

The purpose of this should be to help improve outcomes with interactions between individuals with a special need or a disability and first responders. This is for everyone's safety! To that end, I am in support of H.B. 321 and hope that you will consider supporting this bill as well.

Being the parent of a special needs child who would not be able to communicate critical information such as her own name, address, or phone number, it would be helpful to first responders in the event of an emergency situation. My child is not on the autism spectrum, but I have seen cases on the news where the situation could have been handled differently had the officer known the nature of the individuals disability.

While I do have peace of mind that my child and address is registered for the county I live in, it would be very beneficial for the registry to be statewide. This would allow other parents to have similar peace of mind of knowing that in the event of a fire or natural disaster at home, the registry identifies there is a special needs child in the home.

Heidi Zeller

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