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HOUSE BILL 1835

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State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Representatives Angel, Rolfes, Hinkle, Anderson, Haler, Short, Parker, Johnson, Bailey, Pedersen, and Warnick

Read first time 01/30/09. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs.

1 AN ACT Relating to using respectful language in state laws; and  
2 amending RCW 44.04.280.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 44.04.280 and 2004 c 175 s 1 are each amended to read  
5 as follows:

6 (1) The legislature recognizes that language used in reference to  
7 individuals with disabilities shapes and reflects society's attitudes  
8 towards people with disabilities. Many of the terms currently used  
9 diminish the humanity and natural condition of having a disability.  
10 Certain terms are demeaning and create an invisible barrier to  
11 inclusion as equal community members. The legislature finds it  
12 necessary to clarify preferred language for new and revised laws by  
13 requiring the use of terminology that puts the person before the  
14 disability.

15 (2)(a) The code reviser is directed to avoid all references to:  
16 Disabled, developmentally disabled, mentally disabled, mentally ill,  
17 mentally retarded, handicapped, cripple, and crippled, in any new  
18 statute, memorial, or resolution, and to change such references in any

1 existing statute, memorial, or resolution as sections including these  
2 references are otherwise amended by law.

3 (b) The code reviser is directed to replace terms referenced in (a)  
4 of this subsection as appropriate with the following revised  
5 terminology: "Individuals with disabilities," "individuals with  
6 developmental disabilities," "individuals with mental illness," and  
7 "individuals with (~~mental retardation~~) intellectual disabilities."

8 (c) The code reviser is directed to replace the term "mental  
9 retardation" with the term "intellectual disability."

10 (3) No statute, memorial, or resolution is invalid because it does  
11 not comply with this section.

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