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Dear Mr. Harris,

I appreciate the work you've done on the report to the Legislature from the Residential Habilitation Center Workgroup. Several constituents and self-advocacy organizations came to me with concerns that the Ruckelshaus Center workgroup did not include enough places at the table for people with disabilities. They craved more information about the process of how workgroup membership was determined. Anthony Nash, council member of the Washington State Developmental Disabilities Council, emphasized the council's value of "nothing about us without us." It is critical that when we make recommendations that affect people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, we center the perspectives of those with direct lived experience. I acknowledge that two self-advocates were involved in the first year of the Workgroup, for which I'm appreciative.

However, self-advocacy groups reported asking to be part of the workgroup and being told "you are too high functioning to participate" or that they are "too old".

Therefore, would you please respond to a few questions:

1. How did the workgroup form (what was the process for identifying members and accepting/ turning away requests to participate)? Were groups able to nominate their own representatives?
2. Has the workgroup met with the groups below to discuss the report and hear their concerns about what might be missing?
  - a. People First of Washington
  - b. Self Advocates in Leadership (SAIL)
  - c. Disability Rights Washington
  - d. Allies in Advocacy
3. Can you envision a way to ensure self-advocates have more say about decisions that affect them?

Thank you for your work,

Representative Gerry Pollet  
46<sup>th</sup> Legislative District