## The Department of Labor and Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation should abandon consideration of any plan to

## ELIMINATE the Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services.

### Research shows that consolidation of blindness rehabilitation services into general rehabilitation services hurts blind clients.

BBVS has historically been its own Bureau because of the recognition that services to blind and visually-impaired individuals need to be highly specialized. Studies performed by Mississippi State University’s National Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision found that combining blindness-related vocational rehabilitation services with general disability VR services negatively affect the rehabilitation outcomes of blind and visually-impaired individuals and reduces the average income of those who do achieve employment.

### Projected cost savings is minimal; likely harm to blind clients is great.

Closing BBVS would not save much money compared to the harm it would do, and OVR has not presented any fiscal justification for this action.

### BBVS provides specialized rehabilitation services distinct from the rest of OVR.

Eliminating BBVS would negatively impact social services for blind children, students, adults, and seniors, since BBVS offers critical opportunities for assistance, training, employment and independent living for which there are no counterparts in the general disability vocational rehabilitation program.

### OVR did not seek input from stakeholders regarding this plan.

This option is being planned within the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation without input from the State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Advisory Committee for the Blind of Pennsylvania, the Governor's office, or the blindness community.

## Please contact your state legislators and the following offices to share your concerns about the proposal to eliminate BBVS. Please share phone calls made and copy all emails to KeepBBVS@nfbp.org.

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