

**WCAX**

**Vermont governor signs respectful language act**

Posted: Mar 21, 2014 10:48 AM EDT

Updated: Mar 21, 2014 6:16 PM EDT

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MONTPELIER, Vt. —

With the stroke of his pen, Gov. Peter Shumlin erased thousands of offensive entries from Vermont law.

The governor signed a bill requiring respectful language in state statutes for those with disabilities. Phrases like "mental retardation" will be replaced with "intellectual disability."

Self-advocates say the goal is to be seen as people, not their disorder.

"We get it that the law will not change people on the street from using language that is disrespectful, but the important part here is that the language used in Vermont state law sets a precedent of what is acceptable," said Max Barrows of Green Mountain Self-Advocates.

It's unclear exactly how many changes the bill incorporates, but the large size of the bill itself is an indication.

Though the governor signed it Friday, it won't technically take effect until July.