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**From:** Mason, Janice L (GOV) [/O=SOA/OU=FIRST ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=JLMASON]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 21, 2008 4:45 PM  
**To:** 'fek9wnr@yahoo.com'  
**Subject:** FW: Congrats

-----Original Message-----

**From:** WebMail@gov.state.ak.us [mailto:WebMail@gov.state.ak.us]

**Sent:** Sunday, April 20, 2008 5:50 PM

**To:** Governor Sarah Palin (GOV sponsored)

**Subject:** Other

Web mail from: Ms. Nikki Papoulides

address: 5809 Middlebranch NE Canton OH 44721

(330)361-0587

MESSAGE:

Governor Palin,

I would first like to Congratulate you on the birth of your new baby. Even with Down syndrome this can be a very happy time. Enjoy your baby, rejoice in his life. Because it is a life worth living.

If I have any encouragement or words of wisdom for you to help you through this, it would be that our children do indeed have a life worth living, and that today, our children go to regular schools learning right next to their typical peers, they graduate from high school with regular diplomas, they go to college, find jobs within the community, they pay taxes, because they get paid real money; our children grow up and date, they get married and even drive cars. But if anything, our children live very independent lives, and are worth so much more than what society perceives.

I know what a difficult time this may be for you, I know because I have walked in your shoes. I have a son with Down syndrome and I can tell you that he is really smart, loving, independent, strong

headed and all of this is at four years old. I am excited to see what the future holds for him. And I want you to know, that our children have great futures ahead of them. But we have to advocate for them, and believe me it's a fight and it can be exhausting to try and get the simple things for your child that others would never have to ask for. But we do it. And it's not always a bed of roses, we have challenges, a little different then most families, but it's do able.

Our lives are not very different from the general population, and soon, your life will fall back into that normal range. And you will wonder what all the fuss was about.

But most importantly in my message is that you can do this. It's not the end of the world, even tho it feels like it. Treat your child typical, and have high expectations of your child. Expect that your child will talk, walk, read, count ect, and it will happen. Don't take no for an answer. Stand up and fight when you have to. In the long run your child is the winner.

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