

March 11, 2008

Ladies and Gentleman:

Hello, I am Karin Bertero and I am Ronald Chomicz.

As the Directors of the High Road Schools in CT, we are deeply concerned about the lack of support services available for adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders. We provide services for students ages 5 to 21 years old in the areas of academic, social, emotional and post secondary development. We provide many beneficial programs for our students to prepare for life after high school in the areas of job development/employment, job coaching, social skills, independent living skills, and community participation. In addition, we prepare our students for post-secondary options including job opportunities or college experiences. It is our personal and collective experience, that many of our students reap the rewards of these services by becoming well prepared and successful through the implementation of our services.

Our greatest concern, however, is that upon graduation from our program, our students will be at a detriment without the proper supports and services readily available to meet their varying needs. Our fear is that the skills that we teach and foster with each individual will fall by the wayside and that these students will never have the opportunity to utilize these skills in the workplace and their communities, thus becoming productive and successful members of society.

We ask that you pass HB 5666 in order to secure the future of these individuals with

Autism Spectrum Disorders. The funds will provide much needed services in the areas of job development, job coaching, and social skills by trained individuals who will provide the next step in the continuum of services. We recognize that the pilot program has been successful and ask that you pass this bill in order to expand these much needed services so that these students have a fair opportunity to reach their highest potential, ultimately becoming productive tax-paying members of society. Once, passed, this bill will provide relevant services after age 21 thereby, having a tremendous impact on the quality of life for individuals for Autistic Spectrum Disorders and their families.

Karin Bertero
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High Road Schools of CT

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