

Friis, John

From: ccalabrodixie@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2009 11:32 AM
To: Rep. Fleischmann, Andrew; Rep. Fleischmann, Andrew; Rep. Fleischmann, Andrew
Subject: Support Raised Bill No. 6666

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March 12, 2009

Rep. Andrew M. Fleischmann (D)
Legislative Office Building
Room 3101
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

RE: Support Raised Bill No. 6666

Dear Rep. Andrew Fleischmann:

In regards to the Raised Bill **No. 6666**, I urge you to **support** this bill. Section 7 (New) is vital for children with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder to receive services by or under the guidance of a professional who is certified by the Board Analyst Certification Board (BCBA) as a behavioral analyst. I can tell you from firsthand experience—this certification does make a difference.

I have 2 children who have been affected by Autism. Allow me briefly to tell you about them.

My son Christian is 6 1/2. When my son was two, his developmental pediatrician recommended an Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) program for him. He started to receive ABA services through his birth-to-three provider who was not a BCBA nor was her supervisor. When he transitioned to our school district at age three, they initially did not provide him with an ABA program. During a follow-up visit with my son's developmental pediatrician, she expressed concern with his lack of progress and again recommended for him to be in an ABA program. At this point, as parents, we made the decision to place my son in an ABA centered program where his program would be under the supervision of a BCBA and BCaBA. The gains made are too many to list in this letter to you. My son had the good fortune of staying at this ABA centered school (CCCD in Milford, CT) for 18 months. Our home district at this point offered him an appropriate program under the supervision of a BCBA and we brought him back to his home district. That was 18 months ago. My son's current diagnosis is ADHD and he has an IQ of 92 (his IQ was tested immediately before he entered the ABA center school and it was 70). He is being transitioned from a full-time ABA shadow to a paraprofessional with consultation services by a Behavioral Analyst. His quality of life has changed forever and I wholeheartedly believe it was due to

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the appropriate program put together under the direct supervision of the BCBA's and BCaBA's.

My daughter Samantha will turn 5 next week and was diagnosed at 22 months with Autistic Disorder. Birth-to-three approved ABA services for her program but not under the supervision of a BCBA. I learned the first time around with Christian that a program is not nearly as effective or appropriate unless it is directly by or under the guidance of a BCBA. We immediately supplemented her birth-to-three services with a private vendor (CCCD Outreach) whose program was under the supervision of a BCBA and BCaBA. My daughter transitioned to the district at age 3 and her current program is under the supervision of a BCBA. She has made such progress; She now has about 10 spontaneous words, even more "mands" (requesting needs/wants), can count to 10 and knows her ABC's.

Again, please **support** the Raised Bill **No. 6666**. This will help to ensure the integrity of our children's program. The return on investment is huge!

Regards,

Christina Calabro

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