

March 11, 2010

Dear Representative Fleischmann:

I am writing to you about HB5425 An Act Concerning Special Education and hope that you'll support Section 2 of this bill. Hundreds of scientific studies have shown that applied behavior analysis improves outcomes for children and adults with autism. But these services need to be provided by someone properly trained. Section 2 of this bill requires that anyone who is hired by our schools to provide applied behavior analysis services be a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), a Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst working under the supervision of a BCBA or a state licensed health care professional whose scope of practice includes behavior analysis. So please support Section 2 of this proposed legislation.

Unfortunately Section 3 of this bill places a horrible burden on the parents or guardians of special needs children that will surely hurt many children and their families. Section 3 means that if a special needs child is having problems in school, the parents or guardians would have to prove that the program is not appropriate. This will effectively eliminate the possibility that parents or guardians will have a voice in their child's education by placing a huge financial obstacle in their way. Parents that question the system will need to hire lawyers and expert witnesses simply to try to get the best education for their child. Families of special needs children already struggle hard enough and intentionally placing barriers in the way and trying making things more difficult for them is at best a horrible idea.

Please remove Section 3 from the bill.

Sincerely,

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