

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in regards to Bill 5425 concerning special education. My name is Fran Pagano and I have a son who falls under special education. He is now a senior and the services he has received made it possible for him to succeed.

I am a very involved in my son's education and appreciated the services which were made possible to him through the public education system. If the burden of proof falls on the parents, it will be detrimental to hundreds of students and teachers.

Having a child with a learning disability is often very difficult for a parent to accept, and telling them they will be responsible for proving their child's disability is ludicrous. What will the requirements be for proving it? Is it just a visit to the primary doctor or is proof required by other professionals? Many households do not have medical coverage, so these tests will be an out of pocket cost for families who barely live week to week.

How can we say in one breath that the education of our children is a priority, and then turn around and potentially harm many young students? We hear many political figures speak on the importance of the education of our youth and now want to put them in a position where "success" is just a spelling word and not something they feel is possible. I think it is a duty to see that our children have the best education available to them without placing the burden of proof on families who may not have the means to get it. Please consider revising this bill.

Thank you,

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