



AUTISM SPEAKS™
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March 7, 2010

Testimony in support of Section 2 of HB5425; An Act Concerning Special Education

Members of the committee:

Unfortunately, I am not able to testify in person today due to family commitments, but I hope that you will read my written testimony in strong support of Section 2 of HB 5425.

I have worked with many of you on the committee on issues specific to autism. You have heard my story, and the stories of countless others who have not received appropriate school services to their detriment. What I like best about this Section is that it does not take away CHOICE in services, it just ensures that any child who has a behavior analysis plans as part of an IEP gets the BEST possible interventions from a QUALIFIED professional.

Connecticut's Birth to Three program of early intervention for at-risk children, requires proof of certification for behavior analysts.

The insurance bill I worked with many of you to pass last year, recognizes a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) as someone qualified to provide behavior analysis.

Our children deserve to receive the services of appropriate professionals throughout ALL aspects of their lives, just as ANY child does.

The reality of NOT passing Section 2 will have adverse effects on our children, and our school districts. Hiring people who are not qualified to deliver these services puts school districts at risk of lawsuit for potential violations of Free And Appropriate Education (FAPE). It is critical that school districts have CLEAR direction from the State of Connecticut. No one wins in that situation. Least of all, our children.

It is with great confidence that I support Section 2 of HB5425 and hope that you will do the same.

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