

Testimony in Opposition to SB 1105

I would like to go on record as *opposing* S.B. 1105, the proposal to amend last year's legislation related to the credentialing of applied behavior analysts.

I am a parent of a 24-year old daughter with autism spectrum disorder, and have provided program oversight to residential and school programs serving persons with ASD for over 30 years. In addition, I am currently an Associate Professor in a graduate program to train professionals in the area of autism and applied behavior analysis. My research on treating core deficits in autism is documented as evidenced-based practices by the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders and the National Standards Project. In addition, I have served on a Task Force for the State Department of Education in Connecticut to develop guidelines for the characteristics of effective autism treatment. Most recently, I was the author of the section on "Applied Behavior Analysis" in the *Encyclopedia of Autism Spectrum Disorders*, edited by Fred R. Volkmar of Yale School of Medicine.

Since the 1970's I have witnessed the shift from lifelong institutionalization for children with ASD, to many of these children growing to live happy lives in the mainstream, as a result of sophisticated treatment based on principles of ABA. The treatment of autism requires expertise in applied behavior analysis, and the professionals identified in the language of SB 1105 do not have this training.

I am also a Ph.D. level speech pathologist who is licensed in the state of Connecticut. The Association for Speech and Hearing *acknowledges that current SLP programs do not provide training in applied behavior analysis OR autism, and thus, these professionals do not have the qualifications to provide oversight to ABA programs.*

Please do not support this bill. Having individuals who are not trained in ABA services provide supervision will undo the gains made by scientists who have worked diligently to develop effective, safe, and responsible treatment for these children. The best in any field results from oversight by competent professionals who have knowledge of the science-based treatment that this severe disorder requires. And we owe the best to our children, to their families, and to the communities that support them.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Dyer, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCBA-D