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To Chris Calabrese,

I have the privilege of being the FIRST BCBA in the state of CT, as I moved from FL where the certification process began. I am do NOT support this proposed bill an any way, shape, or form.

Over the last 16 YEARS I have seen programming for children with autism improve, primarily due to the fact that QUALIFIED professionals began setting up and overseeing programs for these children. When I first started working in CT as behavior analyst, I was appalled at the manner in which the children were being taught.

I initially witnessed NO teaching strategies that were based on the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). Teaching strategies based on ABA are the ONLY RESEARCH BASED strategies that have been shown to be effective in educating children with autism. BCBAs are FLUENT in these strategies. MOST SLPs, Psychologists, Social Workers, etc. are NOT FLUENT in the use of these strategies!!!!

I can remember asking one of the first parents I met in CT, "Why was the home therapist using the teaching strategies that she was?" The mother of the child was not sure. I asked permission to reorganize the child's program and based his instruction on the principles of ABA. His rate of learning increased.

I have also worked in schools where I have seen UNQUALIFIED certified professionals trying to teach some of the most challenged learners in the school.....UNSUCCESSFULLY.

It has been my experience that if an individual is UNQUALIFIED to do a job, said individual will be UNSUCCESSFUL. So, why would anyone allow an UNQUALIFIED individual to design educational programming for a child with autism.

UNQUALIFIED = UNSUCCESSFUL= the likely destruction of a child's education.

Why on earth would a bill even be proposed that would put the very lives of these children back into hands of UNQUALIFIED individuals? I am a BCBA and if told that I had to provide speech and language services, I am NOT qualified. I would be UNSUCCESSFUL!!!

If this bill passes it will be a TRAVESTY!!!!!!

Respectfully,
Jodi Mazaleski
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