

To: Education Committee

I am writing, as a mother of a child with autism and as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, to voice my strong opposition to SB 1105. Said legislation is certain to be detrimental to children with autism for a myriad of reasons.

While children with autism require and benefit from a variety of services, including ABA, speech therapy, occupational therapy and physical therapy, each field requires specifically trained experts in their particular areas. ABA is a discipline which requires extensive education and clinical training and supervision, and the professionals listed in the language of SB 1105 are *not* qualified to provide ABA services. While children benefit from a team approach, the intermingling of disciplines would result in added pressures to service providers who do not have the training to carry out these added duties. There is a reason why each team member has a different degree and area of specialty. In Connecticut, there is a shortage of speech and language pathologists, special education teachers and psychologists to meet the state's current educational needs; again, tagging on ABA to the responsibilities of this already short-handed work force without a degree and clinical training in ABA makes no sense and would be extremely detrimental to students in the Autism Spectrum. Without appropriate service delivery, students with autism will regress, causing the cost of later treatment and lifelong care to increase. Instead of becoming taxpayers, many of these students may needlessly become forever dependent on the state. Requiring an administrator to supervise and direct an ABA program when she/he does not have the education and training to make those decisions, not only would prove clinically disastrous, but would increase the cost of providing services, while significantly decreasing the ability of qualified personnel to do their jobs.

Please, consider the welfare of these children. Set them up for success, not failure and DO NOT PASS SB 1105.

Thank You,

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