

Dear Chris,

I have been in the field of ABA for 10 years and have had the opportunity to work with over 100 clients, ages 1-75+, diagnosed with developmental delays; including not limited to Autism, Asperger's, Mental retardation, and psychiatric disorders. I earned my Masters degree in applied Behavior Analysis from Northeastern University and became Board certified in 2008. I have supported individuals living independently of others, in group homes, in community based vocational sites, site based vocational sites, residential school setting, home based setting and in daycare settings. I have worked collaboratively with occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language therapist, EIA's, special education teachers and Para professionals of varies degrees of education and experience. Furthermore, I have worked with the Program Review Committee (DDS) for oversight on treatment.

I am writing to you to request you consider the true ramifications of decreasing the responsibilities of Board Certified Behavior Analysts in providing ABA services to Connecticut's children with Autism. I have profound respect for the teachers in our public schools and wonder how much more we can ask of them while withdrawing our support.

I may not understand the bill in its entirety but as I read it, it states agreement that ABA is the appropriate treatment for children with Autism, yet, negates that those that have dedicated their work and education to the field would be the ones most qualified to oversee the proper application of these services. I may work with children that have developed speech and come to understand some of the therapies and suggestions of a speech and language therapist, yet I would never consider myself a qualified replacement for a speech and language therapist, nor qualified to oversee their work.

To maintain board certification, I must hold to a standard of conduct and ethics that was designed and developed by a group of our peers that is designed to support and protect the individuals we serve. From my experience with DDS PRC and HRC, they are well meaning but often miss the core concepts that make the science what it is. One cannot expect someone that is not familiar with the science and the field to supervise our work and maintain integrity.

Please consider these points when making your vote. Autism is

unique and there are many people that have devoted our lives to understanding, protecting and supporting them. There are supports and systems in place to ensure we do not abuse or misrepresent our abilities. Why recreate the wheel and risk the gap in qualified services in the interim? The cost will be greater when the children become adults, the issues do not go away and as I understand it, the funding for adults services are in no better condition to support the children as they grow more and more dependent on the government due to inadequate treatment by well intended, under supported teachers and Para professionals.

Claudia I Max, MS BCBA