Please oppose HB 5337, section 6. Linda Connolly

Dear Public Health Committee Members:
I hope I am not too late in submitting this testimony. I am the parent of a child with ASD/Asperger's Syndrome. He is now 13 years old. We have unilaterally outplaced him to a private school in CT specializing in ABA. We have spent over 9 years since diagnosis and over 10 years on IEP trying to work with the multi-disciplinary teams in place in the public school. SLPs have always been a part of my son's team. But the only effective interventions, which have been consistently watered down in the public school setting, have been those contributions from BCBA's and highly trained/educated ABA therapists.

The training, education, approach, and methods of SLP's can in no way supplant the interventions that ABA provides to our ASD children. At this point, the behavioral needs of our children are being under-addressed. We are often told, "this person is trained in ABA" only to find out that they've taken a seminar or a class or two. The interventions these "trained" people provide, consistently fall short of the mark of what is effective behavioral modification for our children. Behavior analysis is an entire science that cannot be "trained" via books, seminars, workshops, etc.

To expand an SLP's scope of practice in this way, without proper credential review, is a gross disservice to our behaviorally involved children, their families, the school community, and the greater community in which these under-treated children will be expected to live. The SLP can work on communication. That is their specialty, their training, and their talent. They cannot fill the shoes of ABA unless they are credentialed through extensive ABA education and work experience.

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Respectfully submitted,
Linda Connolly

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