

Dear Members of the Public Health Committee and State Representatives,

My name is Sarah Wislocki, and I am currently a BCBA employed through ACES, providing services within a public school setting. I am a current resident of Bethany, CT, after living for nearly a decade in Sandy Hook, CT. I write to you today, to express my strong support and advocacy for SB 1089 sections 23-29.

I have worked in the field of human services, providing behavioral support and ABA services to children and adults with autism and a range of developmental disabilities in Connecticut for the past ten years.

I have had the opportunity to work within public and magnet schools, group homes, vocational programs, and private home programs. I worked in these settings without a certification from the BACB. I was however very closely supervised and educated by highly qualified BCBA's in each setting. I feel strongly that the intensive guidance and supervision provide to me were pertinent to the quality of behavior supports I was able to provide. The variety of settings to provide services and supports has also afforded me a great opportunity to compare the quality of services we provide to a range of individuals, with a range of different needs. I have been given a great opportunity to work with, learn from, and be supervised and supported by some of the most talented and dedicated behavior analysts in the state. However, I have also been exposed to individuals who *claim* to have the knowledge, experience, and specific expertise to provide behavior supports. Some of these individuals have limited or no knowledge and experience in the ethical assessment, implementation, and consequent need for oversight of programming. Parents, guardians, and consumers have almost no recourse when they receive services that are ineffective, unethical, or in worst cases contributing to long term maladaptive or unsafe behavior. There is currently no regulation for individuals who represent themselves as being qualified to provide behavior analytic services, but who have not completed the rigorous certification process. I have observed first hand misguided, but well intentioned staff implementing programming or not providing services based on the directive of an outranking director who did not possess the knowledge or experience to ethically make decisions on behavior interventions and analysis.

Licensure for Connecticut Behavior Analysts provides a means for families and consumers to know that they are receiving quality behavior analytic services and supports from a qualified professional. SB 1089 (section 23-29 pertaining to behavior analytic services) will also provide protection to consumers from 1.) individuals claiming to provide behavior analytic services, but who do not meet the standards for experience or education; and 2.) individuals providing services under the guise of behavior analysis and ABA, but that does not adhere to the science, practice, and ethical guidelines of behavior analysis.

I appeal to you to pass SB 1089 as a step in the right direction for mental and behavioral health services in Connecticut. Thank you for your time and consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,

Sarah Wislocki, M.Ed, BCBA