

Ms. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey  
State Representative, 133<sup>rd</sup> District – Fairfield  
Room 4001, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Rep. McCarthy-Vahey and Members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Kelly Dunn, and I live in Fairfield, CT, and I have a 15-year old son with Autism. Over the years, I have met many other parents who have children with Autism, and many of those children are now in the process of becoming adults. An internship such as the one proposed by **SB 126: An Act Concerning An Internship Program For Adults With Autism** would be an excellent opportunity for young adults in particular to formally receive “on the job” training.

The job market today has become increasingly difficult for young adults and especially those young adults with Autism and other forms of Special Needs. Compared to their typical peers, young adults with Autism need significantly more training and opportunity to learn the “on-the-job” skills that they need to be successful. An internship such as the one proposed by SB 126 would be an excellent opportunity for Adults with Autism to learn the job skills they need in more safe, structured and supportive environment. It could also be the catalyst to employing more young adults with Autism over time in Connecticut and thereby improve the overall unemployment rate in CT among all adults with Autism. I am sure that SB 126 would also benefit older adults with Autism who did not receive this form of training as a young adult coming out of high school. If staffed with professionals who truly understand the limitations of Autism as well as the best methods of training these people, this internship program could really make a difference in the lives of many who struggle daily with Autism.

As a parent of a child with Autism, and a professional who has worked in Human Resources in many different industries in CT, I HIGHLY ADVOCATE for SB 126 and encourage you and Members of the Public Health Committee to fully support SB 126 as a very meaningful act that could also help alleviate the ever increasing demand for “day” services for adults with Autism in CT.

I will be sending a copy of this letter to other Special Needs parents and teachers in Fairfield so that they are aware of SB 126 as a proposed act soon to be discussed in state legislature. I appreciate all of your efforts toward the young adults in our Fairfield community (as well older adults) with Autism.

Sincerely,

Kelly Farrell Dunn  
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