



DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AREA BOARD 10

*Protecting and Advocating for Persons with
Developmental Disabilities in Los Angeles County*

June 14, 2010

The Honorable Karen Bass
California State Assembly
Capitol Building, Room 319
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2160 (Bass)
Position: Oppose

Dear Assembly Member Bass,

Developmental Disabilities Area Board 10 is a state agency mandated to protect and assert the legal, civil, and service rights of people with developmental disabilities in Los Angeles County. California has a system of 13 Area Boards, covering all regions of the state. It is on behalf of our Board of Directors and over 70,000 people with a developmental disability who reside in Los Angeles County that I write today to convey our opposition for AB 2160 (Bass).

In the past, teachers who taught students with autism were required to have a moderate/severe disabilities specialist credential. Because of a shortage of qualified teachers, legislation was passed in 2008 to ensure there were a sufficient number of teachers to teach students with autism until more teachers could satisfy credentialing requirements. Part of the newly created law lowered the bar so teachers with a level 1 education specialist credential or a credential to teach students with mild or moderate disabilities could instruct students with autism if they met specific criteria. This provision will be repealed on 1/1/12.

In order to solve this shortage of teachers who instruct students with autism, this bill proposes to extend the provisions passed in 2008 until 1/1/14. Current law and recently enacted Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) regulations are already sufficient to ensure there is a supply of teachers who can instruct students with autism to meet the demand. By extending this short term solution which temporarily lowered the bar, it calls into question when a short term solution becomes a permanent one – and this short term solution has not been evaluated as a permanent one.

We thank you for your consideration of our input. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Cathy Blin, Chair
Governmental Affairs Committee

cc: Honorable Members of the Assembly Appropriations Committee
Mr. Geoff Long, Chief Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Honorable Members of the Assembly Education Committee
Mr. Gerry Shelton, Chief Consultant, Assembly Education Committee
Honorable Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee
Mr. Bob Franzonia, Staff Director, Senate Appropriations Committee
Honorable Members of the Senate Education Committee
Mr. James Wilson, Chief Consultant, Senate Education Committee