



DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AREA BOARD 10

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

July 8, 2010

Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Accountability & Administrative Review
California State Assembly
Capitol Building, Room 357
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 435 (Committee on Accountability & Administrative Review)
Position: Support

Dear Assembly Members,

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 support for AB 435 (Committee on Accountability & Administrative Review).

AB 435 (Committee on Accountability & Administrative Review) provides whistleblower protections to regional center employees who report improper activities at their regional center. Forbidding retaliatory actions against such employees, this bill subjects those who intentionally engage in such actions to penalties up to \$10,000 and imprisonment in county jail for up to one year. Additionally, such violators will be civilly liable for any damages the employee may have sustained. This bill also requires the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to investigate allegations of improper activities, up to and including a full audit. DDS must report investigations of regional center activities to appropriate committees in the Legislature, such as the Assembly and Senate Committees on Health and Human Services. If criminal actions are involved, DDS must also report the investigation to the Attorney General.

We are aware that allegations have been made about the business practices of some regional centers. Information substantiating such allegations have been scarce and difficult to reveal. We support this bill because it may provide the necessary framework to embolden regional center employees to report improper activities and bring such issues to light. Doing so may eventually lead to a more efficient regional center system that will better provide for the needs of people with developmental disabilities and increase the quality of the supports and services they receive.

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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: Ms. Nancy Chaires, Consultant, Assembly Accountability & Administrative Review
Honorable Members of the Assembly Human Services Committee
Mr. Eric Gelber, Chief Consultant, Assembly Human Services Committee
Honorable Members of the Senate Human Services Committee
Mr. Jack Hailey, Consultant, Senate Human Services Committee
Ms. Lark Park, Consultant, Senate Human Services Committee