Dan Lewis Gorham

Good morning! I can tell that the intent of LD1373 is to eliminate unwarranted restraint and isolation. But, it appears the proposed bill has left a glaring gap in the realm of special education schools. Schools such as the one where my son attends. My son has autism and significant behavioral issues that cannot always be addressed through conversation or reasoning with him. He has on occasion when "tantruming" required multiple staff to restrain him. The option to NOT restrain him (or place him in a separate space from other students and/or staff) in those moments puts my son, other students and staff in significant risk. What documentation I've seen on LD1373 is vague: "Physical restraint or physical escort that is life-threatening, restricts breathing or restricts blood flow to the brain, including prone and supine restraint; or" (lines 36/37) - since children like my son may not always cooperate by remaining standing or seated during a tantrum, supine or prone restraints may be the only option. The wording is unclear if the intent is to ban ALL prone/supine restraints, or just, as the sentence begins, when such a restraint is life-threatening, restricts breathing or restricts blood flow to the brain." I'd propose that modifications to the proposal be made to differentiate between main stream classrooms, special needs classes and (like my son's situation) specialty schools. Other regulations I've seen specify that such restraints can only be done by trained personnel (main stream classroom teachers would presumably not have a great need for this training). It think that would be a good approach to incorporate. If the authors of the bill wish to get input from a school who, in my opinion, has done a fantastic job of walking the tight rope between safety and free-movement for the students, I'd be more than happy to make an introduction. Feel free to contact me at your convenience.