

Le'Ann Milinder
Stockton Springs
LD 829

Testimony regarding

LD829. An Act to Improve Behavioral Health Support for Students in Public Schools

To the members of the Joint Education And Cultural Affairs Committee:

My comments are specific to the provisions regarding board-certified assistant behavior analysts:

“§4015. Board-certified assistant behavior analyst training

14 School administrative units shall employ an educator at each school in the school
15 administrative unit who has completed a national board-certified assistant behavior
analyst 16 training. The State shall pay all costs associated with the training and shall
provide an

17 annual stipend of \$3,000 for up to 3 years to the educator who has completed the
training”

I applaud the efforts to bring the benefits of applied behavior analysis (ABA) to students in every district. ABA is an evidence-based practice that can make a tremendous difference in the success of students.

I notice that the bill does not address the scope of activities that districts will face in meeting the board-certified assistant behavior analyst requirement. To ensure the necessary expertise that leads to good outcomes for students, ABA services must be implemented by fully qualified, properly supervised professionals who adhere to the Behavior Analyst Certification Board's ethics requirements. At this time there are only 8 Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts in the state of Maine.

The Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) is the national association that certifies Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts (BCaBA). Certification requires three components, 225 hours of coursework, 1000-1300 hours of fieldwork supervised by a BCBA, and successful completion of the certifying exam. Once certified, BCaBAs are not permitted to practice independently. They must continue to be supervised by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) and comply with the BACB's code of ethics. BCaBAs are not qualified to practice without this supervision. All the requirements for BCaBAs can be found at the BACB's website here: <https://www.bacb.com/bcaba/>

Without amendment to this bill, I would be concerned that the practice requirements for BCaBAs may not be fulfilled, leading to lower quality services and a misunderstanding by educational teams about appropriate qualifications. If the bill were to address the full scope of the necessary activities to build a BCaBA workforce, a significant investment of time and funding would be required to bring their numbers to the level needed to comply with this requirement.

Thank you for your consideration.

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