



Parents Leading for Educational Equity
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To: House Committee on Education
From: Parents Leading for Educational Equity
Re: RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES H7721
Date: March 13, 2024

Dear Chairman McNamara and Members of the House Committee on Education,

My name is Ramona Santos Torres, I am the executive director of [Parents Leading for Educational Equity](#) (PLEE). We are a grassroots, family advocacy organization fighting for equitable systems of care for families and children. On behalf of PLEE and the parents we represent, I am eager to express our **strong support** of House Bill H7721. We firmly believe that this legislation holds immense promise for parents and caregivers, ensuring that our voices are not only heard but also respected in the education system. The proposed legislation introduces several key provisions aimed at enhancing parental involvement and safeguarding parental rights in the special education process. Key aspects of the legislation include:

Parental Shared Decision Making:

- Safeguards parental rights that allows parents to make decisions in their child's best interest to ensure continuity of services during disagreements.
- Fosters a collaborative relationship between educators and families.
- Leads to more tailored and effective educational interventions for children with disabilities.
- Provides parents and caregivers with adequate time to review evaluation reports and relevant materials while acknowledging the complexity of decision-making in the IEP process.

Parental Observation Rights:

- Grants parents and caregivers the right to observe proposed placements for their child and sets clear guidelines for limitations on observation visits.
- Promotes transparency and accountability.

In conclusion, H7721 is a significant step towards ensuring that parents of children with disabilities have a meaningful voice in their child's education. By requiring parental consent for various aspects of special education services and promoting transparency and collaboration between educators and families, the legislation empowers parents and caregivers to advocate effectively for their children's needs and ensures that all students receive the quality education they deserve.

Thank you for considering my testimony in support of this important legislation. I urge you to vote in favor of its passage for the benefit of children with disabilities and their families across our state.

Sincerely,

Ramona Santos Torres
Executive Director