



California Association for the Retarded

1220 "S" Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95811

Phone: (916) 498-1635 Fax: (916) 498-1385

www.carforchoice.org

September 12, 2007

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor, State of California
1st Floor, State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: OPPOSE AB1427 (as amended 8/1/7)

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

The California Association for the Retarded is a state-wide organization that recognizes a wide range of disabilities among persons with mental retardation, and advocates for their right to choose from a full spectrum of services to meet their individually identified needs. We firmly **oppose AB1427** which would split the community of persons with developmental disabilities into two camps – one to be favored and the other to be shunted aside.

The bill's effect is contrary to consumers' right to individualized services and marginalizes consumers who choose services which are not on a pilot-approved program list of better-paid and -trained staff. The bill purposely leaves out such services as Work Activity Programs (WAPs), a service choice that continues to serve tens of thousands with multiple identified needs. Such a proven service choice should not be dismissed, along with the aspirations of those who choose it. This bill treats specially designated services to preferential funding while other legitimate service choices continue to be bound by cost containment measures.

Further, its supporters say the measure's intent is to help organize workers into unions, since the system is weak and needs union strength. If the system is weak it is due to woeful underfunding. Trained staff leave for better-paid jobs. AB1427 does not help, but only forces unions on the workers and the system. It is a poor policy decision and not the solution the system needs.

This proposal does nothing to alleviate the chronic problem of inadequate funding of services for people with mental retardation. We strongly urge you to **veto AB1427**. Should you share our vision of the true needs this population lives with, consider calling for increased funding for all services for persons with mental retardation – not just the hand picked services targeted by AB1427. Support true choice from among all services and fund them for success.

Sincerely,

Marion Lieberman
President