



California Association for the Retarded

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

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

www.carforchoice.org

April 4, 2008

The Honorable Sally Lieber
Assembly District 22
State Capitol Building, Room 3013
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB3019 – Support

Dear Assemblymember Lieber:

The California Association for the Retarded advocates for a full range of services for Californians with mental retardation, based on individually assessed needs and service preference. We are aware that an estimated 16,000 individuals with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities are involved with the criminal justice system – and are disproportionately represented in prison populations.

These individuals experience myriad difficulties in prison and tend to suffer higher recidivism rates. The challenges thereby presented to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation are compounded by the exceptional nature of these prisoners, and the challenges can be ameliorated by providing them the services and supports to which they are entitled under the Lanterman Act.

AB3019 addressed these issues by proposing that the Department shall create a specialized rehabilitation and parole program for prisoners with developmental disabilities. We agree that identifying these prisoners and providing services will create conditions which will assist in better integrating them into the community upon release, and support AB3019.

Also, we are concerned to know that many prisoners who need such services are mainstreamed into the general prison population. This creates dangerous conditions for them and we believe it would be more advantageous both to them and to the state to divert them and help prepare them for constructive re-integration into society.

Thank you for your initiative in this matter.

Sincerely,

Marion Lieberman
President