



California Association for the Retarded

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June 4, 2007

The Honorable Paul Krekorian
Assembly District 43
State Capitol, Room 5135
Sacramento, CA 95814
FAX (916) 319-2143

RE: Oppose AB1427

Dear Assemblyman Krekorian:

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 identified needs. We firmly **oppose AB1427** which would create a pilot program in six regional center areas to study the link between higher wages and better training to lower staff turnover and better services.

Higher wages and better training are worthy goals, but the state does not need and cannot afford a study to prove the obvious. The proposal is contrary to consumers' right to individualized services and deprives consumers who choose services not on a pilot-approved program list of better-paid and -trained staff. Further, the proposed pilot would provide 200 hours of training time (10% of a full-time worker's annual hours) with nothing to suggest that such a level of training can be achieved, or that meaningful outcomes would be attained for consumers. The bill purposely leaves out Work Activity Programs (WAPs), a service choice that continues to serve multiple identified needs. Such a proven service choice should not be dismissed, along with the aspirations of those who choose it.

Further, if there are not funds allocated to the pilots, a regional center can use existing purchase of service funds – thereby discriminating against the interests of those who choose WAPs and diverting funds from services that have been starved for money over the past several budget cycles.

This proposal does nothing to alleviate the chronic problem of inadequate funding of service for people with mental retardation. We strongly urge your vote in opposition to AB1427.

Sincerely,

Marion Lieberman
President