



TEXAS EDUCATIONAL DIAGNOSTICIANS' ASSOCIATION

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The Honorable Judith Zaffirini
P.O. Box 12068, Capitol Station
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Senator Zaffirini,

It has come to my attention that you have authored Senate Bill 26, a bill that redefines how the Legislature and state agencies address persons with disabilities. The Texas Educational Diagnosticians' Association greatly appreciates the task that you have undertaken to ensure the respectful treatment of those with intellectual disabilities. However, we are concerned with one such section in your bill:

(15-a) "Person with intellectual disability" means a person determined by a physician or psychologist licensed in this state or certified by the department to have subaverage general intellectual functioning with deficits in adaptive behavior.

This section removes the licensed diagnosticians of the State of Texas to diagnose persons with disabilities. Educational diagnosticians have primarily been the professionals to assess and diagnose behavioral and intellectual disabilities. We do not wish you to strike physicians or licensed psychologists from the bill, but we would like you to include language that will not exclude diagnosticians from being able to diagnose intellectual disabilities. We suggest that that you amend the bill to remove "certified by the department" and add "**or a certified educational diagnostician**" to remedy this situation.

Again, we truly appreciate the great strides you are making with SB26. However this one small oversight could greatly diminish the ability to accurately and promptly diagnose individuals with intellectual disability. Thank you for your time, and please feel free to contact me to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Heath
President
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