

Memorandum

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To: All House Members

From: Representative Thomas L. Mehaffie, III and Representative Thomas P. Murt

Subject: Better Access To Treatment Act ('BAT'): Recognizing Applied Behavior Analysis as an Independent Profession in PA

Upon our return to session this Fall, we intend to introduce legislation to create a professional licensure for Behavior Analysts.

Pennsylvanians are struggling with many chronic illnesses such as obesity and diabetes, neurodevelopmental problems such as ADHD, Down Syndrome and autism, mental health conditions such as addiction, PTSD and suicidality. Our aging population is struggling with conditions such as Alzheimer's and dementia. Care for these individuals is very intensive and costly. Emotionally, these conditions take a huge toll on the entire family. Cost of healthcare is rising and access to mental health services is alarmingly difficult. That said, did you know that there is actually a field out there whose practice addresses all of these things with decades of research to show it works?

It is long overdue for Pennsylvania to recognize this helping profession and those Behavior Analysts who are Board Certified in a way that protects the public. In our current state, there are shortages of qualified providers and there are individuals that claim to be using ABA when in fact they are not certified to do so. This is causing waste in our system and a lack of treatment efficacy which certainly causes harm to our most vulnerable.

Fixing a problem correctly the first time saves money. ABA, when implemented correctly by qualified and experienced providers can save Pennsylvania money by reducing health care costs – including Private Insurance, Medicaid, and Medicare expenditures. Furthermore, we believe licensing Behavior Analysts will serve as a job generator for Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania is currently an exporter of talented graduates who are educated here in our universities but seek employment in the other 29 states where the profession is licensed. Let's do the right thing and keep these talented professionals here in Pennsylvania, helping our constituents gain access to life changing treatment.

Striking out is not an option. Let's give every Pennsylvanian a chance at "BAT." Please consider joining us in co-sponsorship of this needed legislation.

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