



Alliance for the Betterment of
Citizens with Disabilities

Empowering People: Providers Shaping Policies

Assembly Women and Children Committee

Testimony on A4178

Respectfully Submitted on June 9, 2022

Good day, Chairperson Mosquera, Vice Chairperson McKnight and members of the Assembly Women and Children Committee. On behalf of ABCD, thank you for the opportunity to testify and publicly express our gratitude to the bill's sponsors, Assemblywomen Lopez, Speight, Carter, and Murphy. ABCD's Early Intervention Provider Association is comprised of 14 agencies which provide effective early support to over 60% of the children birth to three with developmental delays or disabilities enrolled in the early intervention system of services.

The current department which administers Early Intervention, the Department of Health, is very good at many things. For years they have worked hard to understand and effectively oversee our program, but the administration of direct human services has historically never been one of their strengths.

For Early Intervention, this cultural mismatch has had consequences for which the legislative and executive branches have intervened. We are grateful for this leadership and commitment, but in an aligned system, these interventions would be rare. Most importantly, how could this not have impacted the infants, toddlers, and families we are charged to serve?

It is for these reasons, ABCD supports the creation of the Department of Early Childhood Development with its inclusion of the Early Intervention Service System. Simply put, it is a better fit.

Thank you for your creativity, resolve, and leadership.