

C. Lindsay Knobelauch
725 Uniontown Rd., Westminster, MD 21158
(703)732-0469 * lindsayslp@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern:

As your constituent, speech-language pathologist, and a member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), I ask for your support for Senate Bill 853: Education - Voluntary Ethical Special Education Advocate Certificate Program.

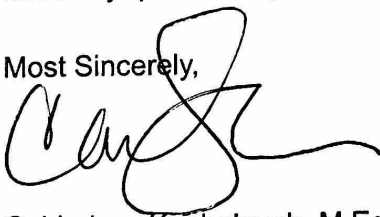
I have been a speech-language pathologist for over fifteen years, and have lived and practiced in Maryland for eight years. I have worked with countless families, many of whom feel as though they need to seek additional support to advocate for their children in the public school system. This is generally when special education advocates become involved, however, there are no minimum requirements, no code of ethics, and no continuing education requirements for an individual to be considered a special education advocate.

SB 853 would provide a degree of consumer protection for families seeking special education advocates. Passage of this bill could result in creating a list in which parents and caregivers seek out more qualified advocates and provide protection for the families and caregivers who are protecting some of our most vulnerable citizens.

Currently, parents are entitled to bring anyone they would like to an IEP meeting according to IDEA and this would not change under this bill. This bill would encourage individuals who work as special education advocates to adhere to a code of ethics and uphold and maintain a high level of professional integrity.

I hope I can count on your support for SB 853. Thank you for your time and attention. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Most Sincerely,



C. Lindsay Knobelauch, M.Ed., CCC-SLP
ASHA Certified Speech-Language Pathologist