

702 Eastshire Drive  
Baltimore, Md. 21228  
February 15, 2020

My name is Margaret Trenkle. I have been working as a speech/language pathologist in Baltimore City since March, 1979. I have seen the difference a good special education advocate can make for a parent seeking additional or different services for their child. I have also seen the harm someone can do that lacks knowledge about the laws governing special education services or the skills necessary for working with a team to arrive at the best outcome for a student. SB 853 would help parents find an advocate with the knowledge and experience to make a difference. Currently, there are no minimum requirements or ethical standards that an advocate must meet before taking on that role for parents. This is often an emotional time for parents and it is important to provide them with knowledge about someone they are seeking to help them obtain the best possible services for their child. This would not change their ability to bring who they would like to an iep meeting but would give them good information to use in choosing an advocate to assist them.

Thank you for considering this bill and the impact it could have for parents of children with disabilities. I hope that you will consider giving SB 853 a favorable report. Please feel free to contact me at 410-262-8772 if you need additional information.

Sincerely,



Margaret M. Trenkle, MS, CCC-SLP

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