

COALITION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

February 28, 2019

Chair Youakim and Members of the Education Policy Committee,

On behalf of the PACER Center and the Coalition for Children with Disabilities, I am writing in support of H.F. 1559, which provides funding for paid orientation and training for paraprofessionals. We strongly support this bill.

Paraprofessionals play an important role in the education of students with disabilities. In order for paraprofessionals to be most effective, they need to understand the disability of the children with whom they work and be knowledgeable of the accommodations that will help them be successful in the classroom. Providing funding to support paraprofessionals to receive paid orientation and professional development will enable them to better support the individual needs of students with disabilities. Without proper training, paraprofessionals may unintentionally escalate a student's behavior, resulting in additional challenges. Providing opportunities for paraprofessionals to receive training and meet with students' teachers will be beneficial to both students and professionals.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our position. We urge you to support H.F. 1559. Please contact Sarah Clarke at sclarke@hyldenlaw.com or 952-201-4654 with any questions. Thank you!

Sincerely,



Gretchen Godfrey
Assistant Director, PACER Center
Member of the Coalition for Children with Disabilities

Autism Society of Minnesota ausm.org (651) 647-1083	Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota efmn.org (651) 287-2300	Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance braininjurymn.org (612) 378-2742	PACER Center, Inc. PACER.org (952) 838-9000	Prader-Willi Syndrome Association of MN pwsa-usa.org/MN (763) 242-9074	Proof Alliance proofalliance.org (651) 917-2370	The Arc Minnesota arcmn.org (952) 920-0855
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