



**LEGISLATION & PUBLIC
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August 7, 2017

Honorable Ricardo Lara
Chair, Appropriations Committee
California State Senate
Capitol Building, Room 5050
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1379 (THURMOND) – SPONSOR AND SUPPORT

Dear Senator Lara:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, is proud to sponsor and support AB 1379. This bill is scheduled for hearing in the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 21, 2017.

AB 1379 increases resources for local jurisdictions to ensure local building inspectors have the appropriate training and skills to assist businesses to comply with state and federal access laws when reviewing building plans for new construction or renovations. The bill extends the sunset on the business license fee currently collected by local jurisdictions. The measure also temporarily increases and collects a \$4 (instead of \$1) fee on business licenses and renewals. For jurisdictions with no business license fee, it allows this fee to be collected from building permits. AB 1379 allows the local jurisdictions to temporarily retain 90% of the fee instead of the current 70% which will be placed in a special fund for CASp certification and training.

Many local jurisdictions do not have sufficient resources to provide Certified Access Specialist training and certification for local building inspectors. Without the resources for appropriate training and certification, local

building inspectors do not have the skills and knowledge to ensure that building plans they review comply with state and federal access laws. Some jurisdictions do not require business licenses. AB 1379 would make it so that jurisdictions that do not have business licenses can still collect a fee by including building permits, if no business license exists in the jurisdiction.

Building inspector CASps play an essential role in ensuring accessibility as they provide permitting and plan check services for new construction and renovations. This bill is a proactive measure to increase resources to accomplish this goal. The measure is a balanced approach to address the needs of the disability and business communities, and local jurisdictions by providing resources to help ensure equal access and compliance.

For these reasons, we are proud to sponsor and support this bill. We thank Assembly Member Thurmond for his leadership on this bill.

Please contact me if you have any questions about our position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Evelyn M. Abouhassan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Evelyn" and middle initial "M." clearly visible, followed by the last name "Abouhassan".

Evelyn M. Abouhassan
Senior Legislative Advocate
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Tony Thurmond, California State Assembly
Rodolfo Rivera Aquino, Legislative Aide, Office of Assembly Member
Thurmond
Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Debra Cooper, Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee