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April 5, 2018

Honorable Patrick O'Donnell
Chair, Education Committee
California State Assembly
Capitol Building, Room 2196
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2171 (FRAZIER) – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member O'Donnell:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports AB 2171**. This bill is scheduled for hearing in the Assembly Education Committee on April 11, 2018.

AB 2171 increases opportunities so that individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental disabilities (ID/DD) can prepare for and engage in competitive integrated employment (CIE). The measure requires the Superintendent, the Director of Developmental Services, and the Director of Rehabilitation to develop an interagency agreement that ensures the seamless and coordinated delivery of services and supports to individuals with disabilities who are eligible for special education services or who are eligible for services provided by the State Department of Education, the State Department of Developmental Services, or the Department of Rehabilitation. The interagency agreement needs to be submitted to the Legislature by January 1, 2020.

As proposed to be amended, AB 2171:

- 1) Creates a mechanism so that consumers can easily access their records from each of the three agencies to share with the other agencies. The goal of this provision is to promote self-advocacy and better coordination of services and collaboration amongst the Departments.
- 2) Requires each of the Departments' service plans - Individual Program Plan (IPP), the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and the Individualized Program for Employment (IPE) to specify how each Department will support the individual in obtaining or retaining competitive integrated employment in cooperation with the other agencies.
- 3) Strengthens person-centered planning and Employment First across the three agencies, effectively extending the Employment First Policy to the California Department of Education and the state Department of Rehabilitation (DOR).

Individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities want to work in integrated settings earning a competitive wage. Unfortunately, they are often unemployed or work in segregated settings earning below minimum wage.

Over the last few years, California adopted policies to advance competitive integrated employment options for individuals with developmental disabilities, including: The Employment First Policy, adopted in 2013, and the "Real Work for Real Pay in the Real World": A Blueprint to Implement the Employment First Policy, which was adopted in May 2017. The Blueprint is a plan to implement new and existing federal and state policies that impact competitive integrated employment.

AB 2171 is a positive step forward to advance these policies, creating a more unified system of services and supports to promote competitive integrated employment. The measure ensures every individual has an opportunity to experience a system with one goal - working at minimum wage or above in the community.

For these reasons, DRC supports this bill. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Evelyn M. Abouhassan". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Evelyn Abouhassan
Senior Legislative Advocate
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Jim Frazier, California State Assembly
Amber Garcia, Legislative Aide, Office of Assembly Member Frazier
Honorable Members, Assembly Education Committee
Tanya Lieberman, Deputy Chief Consultant, Assembly Education
Committee