



**LEGISLATION & PUBLIC
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March 22, 2018

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

RE: AB 2704 (O'DONNELL) – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member O'Donnell:

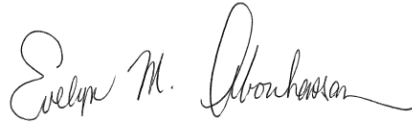
Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports AB 2704**. This bill is scheduled for hearing in the Assembly Education Committee on April 11, 2018.

AB 2704 strengthens the Family Empowerment Centers (FEC) by increasing the FEC base grant size from \$150,000 to \$223,000, and expanding the number of centers throughout the state. The bill imposes additional requirements on centers as a condition of receiving a grant and requires the Department of Education, among other actions, to develop a data collection template for use by centers and provide guidance to centers to improve data collection practices.

FEC's are a critical resource to the disability community. Among other responsibilities, FEC's assist families to better: 1) understand the nature of their child's disability, including the educational and developmental needs; 2) communicate effectively with personnel responsible for providing special education, early intervention, and related services; 3) understand the decision-making processes and the development of individualized education plans; and 4) obtain appropriate information regarding the range

of options, programs, services and resources available. Because of the critical nature of the services FEC's provide the children with disabilities and their families, 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, reading "Evelyn M. Abouhassan". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Evelyn Abouhassan
Senior Legislative Advocate
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Members, Assembly Education Committee
Debbie Look, Senior Consultant, Assembly Education Committee
Naomi Ondrasek, Fellow, Office of Assembly Member O'Donnell