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August 3, 2017

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

RE: AB 279 (HOLDEN) – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Lara:

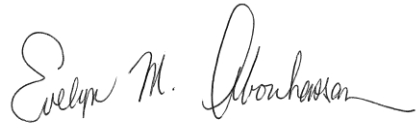
Disability Rights California, a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, supports AB 279. This bill is scheduled for hearing in the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 21, 2017.

AB 279 extends authority to the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and regional centers to adjust the rates of providers to comply with legally binding minimum wage levels enacted in the local jurisdictions where they employ workers to meet consumer service needs under the Lanterman Act. Without an increase to reimbursement rates to meet mandates, many service providers may shut their doors, resulting in a shortage of community-based services and supports.

Disability Rights California has been a strong supporter of ensuring wage equity in the DDS system. Adjusting rates to meet the requirements of local mandates will strengthen the community-based system which is now the safety net for consumers.

For these reasons, we support this bill. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position.

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 M. Abouhassan
Senior Legislative Advocate
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Chris Holden, California State Assembly
Elle Hoxworth, Legislative Aide, Office of Chris Holden
Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Brendan McCarthy, Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee