



**LEGISLATION & PUBLIC
INFORMATION UNIT**

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September 18, 2017

Honorable Jerry Brown
Governor of California
Capitol Building, 1st Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 411 (BLOOM) – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Brown:

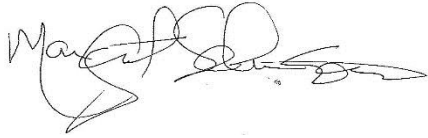
Disability Rights California, a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, supports AB 411 and requests your signature.

Existing law authorizes prosecuting witnesses to have up to 2 persons of their choosing for support at the preliminary hearing and at trial, or at a juvenile court proceeding, during the testimony of the prosecuting witness. This bill would authorize these witnesses, as well as certain child witnesses, to be accompanied by a dog, trained in providing emotional support, while testifying.

We support allowing witnesses who need emotional support to have specially trained facility or therapy dogs to provide the support. Many witnesses with disabilities may need such support to testify. We appreciate that the author added a provision indicating the bill does not apply to witnesses who use service animals for mental health or other disabilities.

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

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margaret Johnson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Margaret Johnson, Esq.
Advocacy Director
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Richard Bloom, California State Assembly
Naeemah Charles, Fellow, Office of Assembly Member Bloom
Legislative Affairs, Office of Governor Brown