



**LEGISLATION & PUBLIC
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March 29, 2017

Honorable Ash Kalra
Chair, Aging and Long-Term Care Committee
California State Assembly
Capitol Building, Room 5160
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 550 (REYES) – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Kalra,

Disability Rights California, a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, supports AB 550. This bill is scheduled for hearing in the Assembly Aging and Long-Term Care Committee on April 4, 2017.

This bill would increase the base allocation for local ombudsman programs from \$35,000 to \$100,000 per fiscal year and would appropriate \$2,250,000 from the General Fund to the California Department of Aging for that purpose. Disability Rights California has long held that access to independent and sufficiently funded Ombudsman services is essential to the protection of persons with disabilities who reside within facilities. Integral to the function of Ombudsman is to provide information and education on consumer rights; investigate complaints; assist clients in filing grievances, complaints and appeals; assist clients in administrative proceedings and in court when appropriate; and have the capacity to address systemic issues. Ombudsman can only be effective in providing these services if there is adequate funding to do so. AB 550 would substantially improve the delivery of these services and thereby improve the protections for person with disabilities in Long-Term Care facilities.

For these reasons, we support AB 550. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Curtis Child". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Curtis" and last name "Child" clearly distinguishable.

Curtis Child
Legislative Director
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Eloise Gomez Reyes, California State Assembly
Melissa Cosio, Legislative Aide, Office of Assembly Member Reyes
Honorable Members, Assembly Aging and Long-Term Care
Committee
Barry Brewer, Chief Consultant, Assembly Aging and Long-Term
Care Committee