



**LEGISLATION & PUBLIC
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June 14, 2017

Honorable Jim Wood
Chair, Health Committee
California State Assembly
Capitol Building, Room 6005
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 398 (MONNING) - SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Wood:

Disability Rights California, a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, supports the proposal to eliminate the “sunset” provision in the current legislation (Welfare and Institutions Code 4353 et. al.), which established a network of service programs throughout the state for survivors of traumatic brain injury (TBI) in SB 398. This bill is scheduled for hearing in the Assembly Health Committee on June 20, 2017.

As you may already know, in the United States, TBI is more common than injuries and conditions of heart attack, breast cancer, spinal cord injuries, AIDS and multiple sclerosis combined (Kolb & Whisaw, 2009). TBI diagnosis is responsible for approximately \$76.5 billion in annual direct, indirect medical and rehabilitation costs and loss of productivity in our country (CDC, 2013) and each survivor is left with an average lifetime cost of care and rehabilitation of \$7 million (CDC, 2011). Of the 2.2 million veterans returning from the Iraqi and Afghani combat theaters, up to 22.8% sustained a mild TBI as a primary or secondary diagnosis (Institutes of Medicine, 2013). Lastly, homelessness has been found to be directly related to both head injury and prior imprisonment (Kushel, 2005).

Disability Rights California is dedicated to improving the quality of life for TBI survivors and their families and friends through advocacy assistance, education and outreach to build the TBI community awareness and support for inclusion. There are only 7 sites in California that coordinate services and help improve the quality of life for adult survivors of TBI and these 7 sites only serve 19 counties. SB 398 will allow these sites to continue their important work to support TBI survivors. This legislation will add stability to the program and allow for an opportunity to expand services to reach more TBI survivors in more counties.

For these reasons, we support this bill. Please contact me if I can provide any further information.

Very truly yours,

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 Bill Monning, California State Senate
Bethany Westfall, Legislative Director, Office of Senator Monning
Honorable Members, Assembly Health Committee
John Gilman, Principal Consultant, Assembly Health Committee