



**LEGISLATION AND
COMMUNICATIONS UNIT**

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April 5, 2019

Honorable Connie Leyva
Chair, Education Committee
California State Senate
Capitol Building, Room 4061
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 428 (Pan) as introduced February 21, 2019 – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Leyva:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports SB 428**. This bill is scheduled for hearing in the Senate Education Committee on April 10, 2019.

This bill would require an applicant for a clear multiple or single subject teaching credential to complete a course in youth mental health first aid. The bill would authorize a teacher to provide youth mental health first aid to pupils, and would prohibit a teacher who provides youth mental health first aid from being held liable for any civil damages as a result of providing it.

The provisions of SB 428 will help to destigmatize mental illness and disability while providing teachers with the support and training they need to more competently serve their students. DRC believes that every student deserves a high-quality education in the least restrictive environment possible. We also believe that students should be served by highly trained professionals and while we support the language of SB 428, the first aid services described in the bill should be part of a comprehensive treatment plan, not a substitute for competent care. Educators are masters of their craft but should not be expected by parents or administrators to serve as

replacements for mental health care.

DRC supports SB 428 and looks forward to collaborating with the author to address the concerns detailed above. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jimmy Fremgen". The signature is stylized with large, flowing loops and a long horizontal tail.

Jimmy Fremgen
Senior Legislative Advocate
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Education Committee
Ian Johnson, Principal Consultant, Senate Education Committee
Honorable Richard Pan, California State Senate
Melissa Bardo, Legislative Aide, Office of Senator Pan
Roger Mackensen, Policy Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus
Committee