

**From:** Abby Roy <aroy@sterncenter.org>

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 22, 2022 6:46 AM

**To:** Brian Campion <BCampion@leg.state.vt.us>; Cheryl Hooker <CHooker@leg.state.vt.us>; Andrew Perchlik <APerchlik@leg.state.vt.us>; Virginia Lyons <VLyons@leg.state.vt.us>; Thomas Chittenden <TChittenden@leg.state.vt.us>; Joshua C. Terenzini <JTerenzini@leg.state.vt.us>

**Cc:** Daphne Kinney-Landis <dkinneylandis@leg.state.vt.us>

**Subject:** [External] H. 716

[External]

Dear Senate Education Committee,

I am writing to request that you remove the second part of H. 716 and **allow the Special Education Rule changes to take effect as planned on July 1, 2022.**

I am a licensed school psychologist who has facilitated and participated in countless special education eligibility meetings across three states. I trained in Massachusetts and then spent eight years working in the Illinois public school system, a state that uses response-to-intervention to determine special education eligibility. While we certainly complied with adverse effect rules, we did not use them as a means to deny children access to the specialized instruction that they desperately needed. Educators and specialists used their clinical judgment and expertise to interpret numbers, understand individual processing strengths and weaknesses, and make decisions in a child's best interest.

When I moved home to Vermont five years ago, I transitioned to working as an evaluator in the private sector at the Stern Center for Language and Learning. In that role, I help parents and educators understand an individual learning profile and highlight their strengths and weaknesses to identify appropriate instructional and environmental supports. My recommendations are rooted in science and evidence-based practices. Yet I have witnessed many children being denied the instruction they need because they do not fall below the 15<sup>th</sup> percentile in 3 separate measures.

I realize that educators responsible for making these decisions do not deny the need for change. Rather, they would like more training and time to prepare. While I understand their concern, I believe it will behoove them to embrace this change and acknowledge the steep learning curve. In my experience, you only develop clinical judgment and expertise by having the opportunity to use these skills. Educators in Vermont have been robbed of that opportunity because they rely heavily on computer software programs and cut scores to make decisions for them.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Abby Roy

Abby Roy

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