

DATE

ADDRESS

Dear [Assemblyperson or Senator name]:

My name is []. I live in your district [district name]. In 2014, New York enacted a separate licensure law for behavior analysts. As a constituent of yours, I want to first applaud the recognition by the Legislature that behavior analysis is an important and separately recognized area of study and professional licensure. Despite this recognition, however, it has come to my attention that there is a unique restriction placed on these professionals in that they may only treat those individuals diagnosed with autism.

Restricting a professional license based on a particular diagnosis is extremely unusual and unnecessary. A profession is defined by its governing principles, ethics, training, and qualifications, not by a specific diagnosis. Behavior analysts apply scientific principles of learning and behavior systematically to address socially significant human behavior, not simply those associated with autism.

My primary interest in Applied Behavior Analysis is in its [INCLUDE A PERSONALIZED STATEMENT HERE OF WHY IT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO GET RID OF THE RESTRICTION. If you have a son/daughter/relative that needs services but is not diagnosed with autism, please provide the details of this concern].

The profession of behavior analysis, longstanding for over 50 years, has made innumerable improvements in the lives of individuals in many ways, including but not limited to educational applications and learning, behavioral challenges, substance abuse, brain injury, Alzheimer's, ADHD, behavioral medicine, Down syndrome, to name only a few, and has contributed substantial empirical evidence to the effect.

Unfortunately, given the scope restriction, licensed behavior analysts in New York are limited to providing services to individuals with autism, unfairly discriminating against others in our state by preventing them from obtaining these services.

Of all the states that have recognized the profession of behavior analysis through licensure, which is now 31 states, New York is the only state that restricts the scope of practice to individuals with a particular diagnosis. In fact, it is the *only profession in New York* that is restricted in its practice to individuals with a particular diagnosis. This restriction is seriously impeding training opportunities for students causing students to choose to train in other states and leading to professionals choosing to either leave or avoid coming to New York to provide these crucial services. This injustice and discriminatory practice must change to allow licensed behavior analysts to practice in their profession as they have been trained to do, just like every other profession in New York as well as the many other states that license behavior analysts.

As such, I would urge you to consider addressing this matter so that those in need may continue to avail themselves, just like the autism community, of these important professional services.

Please support bill numbers **A-6389A (Assembly number)/ S-4967A(Senate number)** sponsored by Assemblywoman **Crystal Peoples-Stokes** OR sponsored by Senator **James Skoufis** [INSERT THE REPRESENTATIVE NAME AND BILL NUMBER DEPENDING ON WHETHER YOU ARE WRITING TO A SENATOR OR ASSEMBLYPERSON] , which reads:

"Relates to the practice of applied behavior analysis; removes the requirement for a diagnosis and prescription or order from a person who is licensed or otherwise authorized to provide such diagnosis and prescription or ordering services in its definition."

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have and work to correct this concern.

Very truly yours,