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January 5, 2012

The Honorable Jim Beall, Chair  
Assembly Human Services Committee  
State Capitol, Room 5016  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SUPPORT IF AMENDED AB 254 (Beall) – as amended January 4, 2012**

Dear Assembly Member Beall:

The members of the California Disability Services Association (CDSA) support the lives of thousands of people with developmental disabilities throughout California in a wide variety of programs, including employment services. We respectfully **SUPPORT IF AMENDED** AB 254 (Beall).

CDSA shares the vision of pursuing full employment for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities at wages that are at or above the minimum. We will work with all stakeholders to find pathways to this vision that provide integrated, effective, practical solutions to the many barriers that continue to limit employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

But we are also strongly committed to the central principles of the Lanterman Developmental Services Act, California's landmark civil rights law that empowers people with disabilities; their family and their Inter-Disciplinary Team, not the State, to decide their own "priority outcomes".

AB 254 would empower the State to designate one result – integrated, competitive employment at minimum wage or higher - as the highest priority outcome for all consumers. Dictating a particular result as "the priority outcome" is inconsistent with a person-centered planning process, could limit the range of services from which people with disabilities may choose and thus could discourage meaningful choice.

It should be a priority of the State of California to remove barriers and provide resources for necessary supports so that all individuals with developmental disabilities of working age have opportunities for integrated, competitive employment consistent with their rights under the Lanterman Act. In plain Language – Opportunity is for all.

In addition, AB 254 would be greatly strengthened by making the critical link between the very limited resources the state has made available to encourage job development, placement and retention and achieving the goal of improving employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

We therefore respectfully request three simple, but very important amendments to AB 254 (See attached). Without these modifications, CDSA believes that AB 254 will not meaningfully encourage employment outcomes but could inadvertently, yet significantly damage the central component of the Lanterman Act – personal choice and the Individual Program Plan (IPP) - that must continue to determine the services and supports a person needs to pursue their own life goals and aspirations.

For all of these reasons, CDSA SUPPORTS IF AMENDED AB 254 (Beall).

If you have further questions regarding our position, please contact Dwight Hansen, Hansen & Associates, at (916) 798-0550.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher J. Rice". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "R".

Christopher J. Rice  
Executive Director

C: Members, Assembly Human Services Committee  
Eric Gelber, Majority Consultant

**AB 254 (Beall)**  
**Proposed Amendments**

**AMENDMENT #1:**

At Section 1, page 3 beginning at line 19, make the following amendment:

(4) When developing an individual program plan for a transition age youth or working wage adult, the regional center ~~planning team shall be guided by~~ **should take into consideration** the Employment First Policy described in Chapter 14

**AMENDMENT #2:**

At Section 1, Page 3 following line 29, insert:

***Nothing in this Section shall be interpreted to limit or prohibit a consumer from choosing or receiving any service or support, nor permit or require a regional center to restrict the types of services or supports a consumer may consider during the development and implementation of their Individual Program Plan.***

**AMENDMENT #3:**

At Section 3 page 10 beginning at line 8, make the following amendments:

4869. (a)(1) It is the policy of the state that integrated, competitive employment is the priority outcome for working age individuals with developmental disabilities. This policy shall be known as the Employment First Policy.

***By establishing this policy, the state recognizes its obligation to provide the necessary resources, work to identify and remove employment and related barriers and strengthen services and supports that will result in all individuals with developmental disabilities of working age having significant opportunities for integrated, competitive employment consistent with their rights under the Lanterman Act.***